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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[FRIENDS IN NEED.]

"MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED, RED ROSE."

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Sinned Against: Not Sinning," &c.

CHAPTER I.

My love is like a red, red rose,
So newly sprung in June;
My love is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

THE grand old woods are clothed in their summer dress, and somewhere away in their bosky depths the wood pigeons are cooing, and the little birds are lazily twittering on this sultry July afternoon.

But it is deliciously cool in the shade of the narrow woodland paths, which wind so cunningly in and out, and then suddenly open upon a glade where Titania herself might have revelled and have held high holiday with her asinine lover.

Yes; and there were stretches of underwood, too, where the fungi and poisonous mushrooms spring up, and where queer, sapful weeds grew luxuriantly, and where the heart-shaped lichens and delicate woodsorrel carpeted the ground.

Truly, a glorious tract of woodland was Brakeholme Park.

But for two successive generations no Lord of Brakeholme had inhabited the frowning towers of the noble pile which you can see from this knoll.

A goodly edifice looks Brakeholme Towers with the July sun dancing on its little lancet-shaped windows, and more important-looking mullioned casements.

The river Brake runs sluggishly along one side of its walls, for the Towers had been built in the days when such edifices were used asrefuges for wives and maidens, when their fathers, brothers, husbands and lovers were away at the wars.

It is built somewhat in the form of a quadrangle, and dank grasses and noxious weeds now grow in the courtyard.

The yet handsome marble statues are moss-grown and uncared-for, and a marble Venus which has fallen from its pedestal lies amongst the grasses

Like the idol of some unknown race,
Its name and rites forgotten,

and showing the ravages of Time's effacing fingers even more than mortal Venuses usually do, for it has but one hand, one eye, and no nose to speak of.

Utter stillness reigns around, almost like the fabled "silence which lives among the lonely hills."

The somnolent, murmurous hum of the drowsy bees can hardly be called noise, and save that no sound breaks upon the sultry calmness of the summer air.

The windows are nearly all closed, and the age-discoloured blinds drawn down.

The building looks as though it were dead, for no sound nor sight of human nor animal life is there to be heard or seen.

Footsteps!

Footsteps—firm, decided, and quick—and presently two men come in sight.

They stop for a minute to gaze at the deserted-looking mansion, and then pass on through glade and woodland until they come to an open space on the very outskirts of Brakeholme Park.

The men are much about the same age—from eight-and-twenty to thirty; but there the resemblance ends.

The smaller and slighter of the two is the more important in the social scale, therefore he first demands our attention.

Sir Mervyn Petherick is the owner of the broad acres of fallows and uplands, parks and coverts, which adjoin the Brakeholme property.

A rich man, and an only son, his father had been a Cornish miner, who bought his baronetcy, and who died before the dearest desire of his life was accomplished, the union of his only son with some noble old house.

His father is not yet quite three months dead, and as Sir Mervyn has hitherto led a gay, reckless life in London and on the Continent, he does not know much about his neighbours.

He has been pig-sticking in India, buffalo-hunting on the prairies, and in every other way doing his best to get rid of his superfluous money.

Being about to settle down as a country gentleman, and common decency hindering him from entering into the customary gaiety of the past London season, Sir Mervyn has gone in for the milder dissipations of the Academy, and visits to studios; and thus it is that the baronet, sandy-haired, freckled-faced, with a flat, mean chin, thin lips, and cunning light blue eyes, has become acquainted with Clement Woodleigh.

"He is but a landscape painter."

But he looks one of Nature's noblemen, whilst the other is a nobleman merely by Act of Parliament.

Tall, bluff, broad-shouldered, with coal-black curling hair, and sweet dark violet-blue eyes, inherited from an Irish mother, Clement Woodleigh looks more like a country gentleman than like a man whose life has been chiefly passed amidst the roar and din of cities.

The broad-brimmed hat, which crowns his crisp black curls, shades a brow as fair as a woman's; a silky dark beard hides his chin, but the firm, beautifully-formed mouth, but slightly shaded with a moustache, denotes no ordinary strength of character.

"What a pity to let such a splendid old pile as Brakeholme Towers go to ruin in such a way," he remarks presently to his companion, who is lying in the shade enjoying a choice cigar.

"I believe the old Earl has taken some dislike to the place."

"Do you know why?"

"Well, not exactly; I have heard some story about his having been adorably fond of his wife. She played him false, and since the day he discovered her perfidy he never visited Brakeholme Towers again."

"Everything looks neglected," says Clement Woodleigh, as he casts a critical eye at the billowing underwood which is destroying the growth of the forest trees. "It looks like a place with any amount of swamping mortgages over it."

"Quite the reverse," returns the baronet, with some degree of animation. "The estate is as free from incumbrance as mine is. The Brakeholmes are enormously wealthy; but the Earl hates the place so utterly that he will not spend upon it one penny that he can avoid spending."

"Has he any children?"

"Yes, there is a daughter and an heiress somewhere; but no one in society seems to know anything about her. Her father hates her, on account of her mother, so the young lady is, at present, a mystery."

"How very romantic!"

"Deuced unpleasant it must be for her; for there's many a needy peer who wouldn't mind marrying her if she had a clubfoot or a hump-back, on account of her wealth which her father cannot keep from her; she is the heiress of Brakeholme!"

"Perhaps she is of a romantic turn of mind, and goes about in disguise," suggests the painter, carelessly; "hoping to get someone to marry her for herself alone, and not for the sake of filthy lucre."

"Rather a difficult thing now-a-days for a woman to secure a husband unless she has the wherewithal to make, or help to make, the pot boil," replies Sir Mervyn, cynically.

"My dear fellow!" exclaims the painter, eagerly; "why don't you try and discover the whereabouts of this mysterious fair one—go in and win, and thus join the Brakeholme and Petherick properties?"

"By Jove!" ejaculates the baronet, taking his cigar from between his lips, his little light eyes glittering; "that idea of yours, Woodleigh, is a stroke of genius. But how is one to find her?"

"Why, make up to the people about the place and find out from them where the heiress is. The Lady of Brakeholme is too important a person for you to be driven to the necessity of advertising in the agony column of the 'Times' for her!"

"Joking apart, Woodleigh, it would be an experiment worth trying."

"Of course it would," returns Clement Woodleigh. "Hallo! What's that?"

Shriek after shriek of some human being in distress arises on the air of the still July afternoon.

A fainter shriek, and then the crashing of the underwood; and a handsome, dark-skinned, gipsy-faced man, attired in rusty black velvet, rushes past not twenty yards from them, a baby in his arms.

The two men simultaneously start to their feet, and give chase almost instinctively.

Seeing he is pursued, the man, who looks

somewhat like a gamekeeper, attempts to cross the low wall, but the burden in his arms hinders him.

It must be a matter of life and death with him.

He sees his pursuers gaining upon him; so laying the wailing baby upon the soft sward, he jumps across the wall, which forms one side of a sunk fence, runs across the road, crosses the wall at the other side with a rapidity evidently born of much practice, and disappears in the bosky depths of the woodlands beyond.

Instinctively the men stop as they come up to the child.

It gives the fugitive time; and Clement Woodleigh says:

"There's no use in going after the fellow. He has gained too much time."

"What a plague of a mess?" ejaculates Sir Mervyn, placing his hands on his knees and stooping down and looking at the child.

"Poor little thing!" says Clement Woodleigh, tenderly, as he, too, stoops, but it is to take the little one in his arms. "I say," he continues, "we had better look about us. There has been some foul play somewhere. The screams seemed to come from that direction."

They go along the narrow woodland path, and presently emerge into a more open space. But there is nothing to be seen.

On they go, listening every now and again, and at length they hear a faint moan.

It seems quite near to them. They cautiously advance through the brushwood, and there stretched at full length upon the soft moss, under the shade of the trees, lies a young woman.

Her hat has fallen off, and there has evidently been a struggle, for her clothes are torn, her cloak lies in a corner, and her exquisite fair hair is dabbled with her blood.

Although her eyes are closed, and the dew of death seem to be upon her brow, yet both men stand and gaze awestricken upon her glorious beauty.

She looks as a dying Una might look in the depths of the forest.

But the baby is not so composed. No sooner does she see the prostrate form than she stretches out her little hands and screams lustily.

Her voice arouses the woman, who opens her eyes and feebly tries to speak.

Sir Mervyn kneels down beside her:

"What can we do for you?" he asks, with more gentleness and sympathy in his tone than the world would have given him credit for.

But let us hope we are all much better and much more loveable than the world usually admits us to be.

"My baby," she says, "give her to me."

They place the child in her arms—but she is too weak to hold it, and Sir Mervyn takes it from her.

Presently she essays to speak, and Clement Woodleigh bends down to listen to what she says.

"Will you," she says, with much difficulty, "go to Brakeholme Towers, and bring Lady Isola Marbourne to me?"

"Lady Isola Marbourne!" exclaim Sir Mervyn in amazement; "why that is the Earl's daughter. You make a mistake, she is not at the Towers, for the place is shut up."

"She is at the Towers, send for her," she asserts, faintly but emphatically.

"I'll go!" exclaims Clement Woodleigh, whose curiosity is thoroughly aroused.

And before Sir Mervyn can make any reply, the painter is dashing through the underwood and the forest paths, in his eagerness to reach the Towers.

CHAPTER II.

The "red, red rose."

The paths are overgrown with the luxurious growths of bramble and briar; and the low-growing branches of the trees not infrequently

put a barrier in Clement Woodleigh's way as he pursues his course.

It is a sort of thing which suits his romantic temperament.

To think that the mysterious heiress, of whom he and Sir Mervyn had just been speaking, should have been actually living in Brakeholme Towers at that minute, was almost more than he could credit!

Nay! it is fully more than he can credit, and in his anxiety to find out if it really be so, he manfully fights his way until he comes upon the bank of the Brake, upon the further side of which loom the frowning Towers.

The painter is in a dilemma. Already has he lost time by taking wrong turnings, and industriously following paths which generally culminated in nothing, after the aggravating fashion of forest paths, that one is often tempted to wonder what fast had beaten them, and why.

He stands upon the bank of the Brake, and is not sure which turn he should take. Trusting to instinct, he goes to the left, and soon crosses a bridge.

Advancing, he at length reaches the gates of the quadrangle which he had passed, in company with his friend, earlier in the afternoon.

The great gates look as though they had not been opened for half a century. The grasses and mosses have encroached more than a couple of feet up their height, and the rusty bolt of the massive lock looks as if fastened there for ever.

There is a bell-handle, however, and this Clement Woodleigh rings with such vigour as to waken a thousand echoes in the dull old quadrangle.

There is the sharp bark of a dog heard somewhere, and then its whining tones, as though it were sharply and quickly hushed. Again the painter pulls the bell, and then listens.

Not a sound to be heard now, but the echoes reverberating as if rejoicing that someone had awakened them.

They presently die away, and the place resumes its ghostly stillness.

But Clement Woodleigh is determined to make himself heard—determined that, if possible, he will come to the bottom of this extraordinary and mysterious coincidence.

Therefore, when the second ring has no effect, he gives a third, and, as if in fulfilment of the adage that "the third time is the charm," footsteps seem to be approaching.

His heart beats eagerly, he holds on to the rusty bars of the gate; but he neither hears again nor sees anyone approaching.

"Well!" says a voice at his elbow—a voice the grating harshness of which causes him to wince. "My good gentleman, and who may you please to want?"

An old woman stands before him.

A weird, withered hag, in the meanest of clothing, and with an old hat on her grey elf locks.

There is a malignant expression upon her wrinkled face, which yet, however, bears the traces of much former beauty.

Standing there, sinister-looking and erect, she asks the question almost with an air of defiance.

"I want to see the Lady Isola Marbourne," he says, wondering at his own temerity in saying so.

The old woman gives a harsh laugh.

"So you want to see the Lady Isola? How do you know she is here? I am sure, my good sir, Brakeholme Towers in their present state don't look much like a place where the Lady Isola would choose to live in!"

There was something evasive in her manner and tones, and, therefore, Clement Woodleigh is all the more determined not to leave the place without getting a direct answer.

"May I ask you a question?"

"You may ask me as many questions as you like, my good sir," she replies insolently; "but it remains to be proved whether or not I am likely to answer them. However, I have so

few visitors here, that it is almost a shame I am not more civil to you."

As she concludes, she gives the same harsh laugh.

"I want to know who you are?"

As the painter asks the question he leans his broad back against a pillar of the rusty gates, and gazes curiously at the woman, who might have sat to him for a study of Meg Merrilies.

"Why do you want to know?"

"I simply have my own reasons for it. Who are you?"

"That's no affair of yours," she retorts.

"At present it is very much an affair of mine. I want to know who you are, and if you have any authority for withholding from me the knowledge as to whether or not the Lady Isola Marbourne is at present residing at Brakeholme Towers."

"And I tell you," she says, deliberately, "that I shall not give you any information one way or the other. The whereabouts of the Lady Isola Marbourne cannot be your affair."

The painter's eyes flash; but he preserves an outward show of equanimity.

"Who are you?" he asks again, doggedly sticking to his point.

The woman keenly scans his good proportions with her beamed eyes.

A sardonic grin overspreads her countenance, as she says, demurely:

"I am Isola Marbourne."

"You?"

The painter starts away from the pillar in his utter amazement.

"Yes; I am Isola Marbourne. Is there anything very remarkable in that?" she asks, in a perfectly cool and collected manner.

"I was given to understand that the Lady Isola Marbourne was quite young," he is unwise enough to say in his perturbation.

"Ah!" she exclaims, "just as I thought! you are some fortune-hunter! I can tell you nothing beyond that I am Isola Marbourne."

"The Lady Isola?"

"I never said that; but I am Isola Marbourne for all that."

He looks at her in more and more amazement.

"Surely you cannot be a relative of the Earl of Brakeholme?"

"Why not?" she asks angrily, her dim eyes almost flashing. "Why should I not be a relative of the Earl Brakeholme's? I tell you I am Isola Marbourne, the baseborn sister of the Earl of Brakeholme."

This is an adventure the painter has not calculated upon.

But he thinks of the woman in the wood, of the child, of Sir Mervyn; and Clement Woodleigh recoils at that he has not yet accomplished the task he has set himself to perform; that he has as yet gained no information, whatever respecting the Lady Isola.

"Perhaps there has been a mistake," he ventures to say; "your name being the same as the Lady Isola's, may have led people to the conclusion that it was she who resided here."

"That is a good suggestion of yours. Perhaps you are right."

"Is the Lady Isola here?"

"Tell me first why you want to know?"

Driven to desperation Clement Woodleigh details as briefly as possible the circumstances of his friend and he having found the woman in the wood.

His listener's face changes as he proceeds with his story. It becomes of an ashen grey, and the painter—accustomed to watch subtle changes of countenance—is not slow to take notice of all this.

A new actor appears upon the scene. There is a rustling among the leaves and grasses around in the direction whence the old woman came.

She listens with a startled air, and seems relieved when heavy, dragging, slow footsteps fall upon their ears; and an old man makes his appearance.

He seems conversant with the old woman. Rather short, clad in a suit of rusty brown; his long, matted grey hair and huge beard leaving little

of his face to be seen save a yellow, wrinkled forehead, a pair of cunning grey eyes, and a huge nose.

"Eh! sister—eh! What have we got here? Why do you stand parleying with strangers? You left the side gate open—you left it open! If I had not seen it, who knows what might have happened. And I had not the key to fasten it. You have the key, so come back quickly—come back—come back, and don't stand there gossiping with the stranger."

Clement Woodleigh listens attentively. What is their reason for not leaving the gate open?

"And you?" the painter asks; "may I venture to ask who you are?"

"I!"—the old man looks first at the woman, who gives a gesture of assent—"I am the baseborn of Brakeholme. I am the eldest son of the late earl."

Clement Woodleigh is beginning to be prepared for any number of surprises to-day, therefore he preserves his equanimity, makes no reply, but merely bows.

"And may I ask you, sir," said the old man, "who are you?"

"My name is Clement Woodleigh, and I am a painter," he replies, simply.

"Brother," says the woman, taking the old man a little aside and whispering to him. He starts with surprise, and Clement Woodleigh sees an expression of terror come into his face.

"The Lady Isola!" he says, coming over to Clement Woodleigh; "why, we know nothing of the Lady Isola! How should we? we are two poor people who care the Towers during the earl's absence. How should we know anything about the Lady Isola?"

There is some mystery about the matter: of that Clement Woodleigh feels perfectly convinced, and he is equally determined to find it all out.

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and the painter intends making a bold stroke and invading the mysterious castle, of which the two old creatures before him look like the ogre and ogress.

So he makes no reply, but surveys his ground.

A door or a gate, he was not sure which, had been left open somewhere, so the old man had said.

He looks at both. Surely if all came to all, his physical strength is far superior to theirs combined; all things seem to favour him, and Clement Woodleigh makes one rapid dart past the two old people; along the narrow path he speeds, and at length comes to a small iron door which stands ajar.

They are rushing after him. He hears them, hears their oaths and imprecations, but he heeds them not.

Pushing the door open, he enters a low, vaulted passage, which is so dark because of the sudden transition from the sunlight, that he cannot see his way for a minute.

On he gropes, feeling by the wall, and at length is rewarded by seeing a dim light at the end.

Emerging hastily from the passage, Clement Woodleigh finds himself in a grand old hall, with a wide, shallow oaken staircase leading to the gallery above, off which the doors open.

The footsteps behind come nearer and nearer. It must be now or never.

He hastily rushes up the staircase, tries the handle of the first door. It is locked.

So is the next—and the next. But the fourth door yields, and Clement Woodleigh finds himself in the presence of a girl—

"Like a red, red rose."

CHAPTER III.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace.

BEN JONSON.

TRULY, "Like a red, red rose," looks Isola Marbourne, as she stands there in the old oak-wainscoted chamber with the sunlight streaming in through the stained glass window, and falling full upon her.

A tall, slight, brown, satin-skinned girl, with glorious dark, almond-shaped eyes lighting up an oval face.

Her lips and cheeks are rich in colouring, and the unbound hair which ripples to her waist and below it, is coal black, and waves away from a broad, low brow.

She is attired in, seemingly, but one garment of a coarse texture and blue colour, a belt of the same confines it round her waist, and her neck and exquisitely-shaped arms are bare.

The apartment in which she is seems a strange mixture of squalor and grandeur.

Rare old carved chairs and tables, the former covered with priceless tapestry, are here in company with a rude flock bed and a rush-bottomed chair.

A small tin saucepan hangs from a nail sacrilegiously thrust into the side of a mantel-piece, which is considered a masterpiece of Grinling Gibbons, and some coarse and common cups and plates upon a small table denote that the room is used for all living purposes.

Instinctively, Clement Woodleigh takes off his hat and bows.

The girl only looks at him in sheer consternation.

The colour recedes from her lips and cheeks, and a look of terror comes into her eyes.

"Do not be afraid of me," he says, impulsively holding out his hand. "I am a friend, I assure you. Quick! Quick! for I can hear the old man and woman coming. Tell me if you are the Lady Isola Marbourne?"

She grasps his hand with both hers.

"Yes," in a hushed, frightened tone; "but how did you know?"

"Will you come away with me?" he says, eagerly grasping her hands. "Say you will, there is a dying woman wants to see you. Will you come?"

"I cannot," she replies, apprehensively, "they will not let me."

"Will you trust to me?" he asks, all his chivalry aroused.

He feels like a knight of old rescuing a captive maiden.

"You cannot get me out of this," she says, decisively; "they have sworn that no one ever shall."

"Say no more; but do as I tell you," he says, as he hears the footsteps on the stairs. In another minute the enraged old couple enter the room.

"How dare you do such a thing," shrieks the old woman, making a dart at Clement Woodleigh, whilst the girl crouches terrified down by her bedside.

The old man takes the painter by the arm and tries to force him out of the door.

But the young man seemed to have become possessed of superhuman strength; he firmly seizes an arm of each, and says to the trembling girl:

"Lady Isola, do you wish to leave this place?"

"I do! Heaven knows I do!" exclaimed the wretched girl; "for years I have been almost starved. I have been beaten; I have been cruelly illused. I am never let walk in the open air, except late at night or early in the morning, and then with both these people with me! Take me away! Take me away!"

She has risen, and now stands before them, her glorious eyes flashing, and her whole frame quivering with emotion and excitement.

"It is a falsehood! a base falsehood!" shrieks the old woman. "Rupert!" she continues, addressing the man, "free yourself! Knock him down!"

"You may as well both stay quiet," says Clement Woodleigh, sternly. "I am more than a match for two more like you. Lady Isola," he continues, "if you are willing to trust yourself to me pass on, leave this place, and I shall follow you."

The girl looks at him incredulously. The two old people struggle violently, but their struggles are of none effect.

"Are you afraid to trust me?" he asks.

"No," replies the girl; "I will go," and passing the shrieking, howling pair, she walks

forth down the stairs and out into the sunlight, which has been but as a dream to her for so long.

The girl has no shoes nor stockings, and her coarse blue skirt reaches only to her ankles. All at once a sudden sense of shame overwhelms her as she looks down at her bare feet.

They are beautiful and brown, with exquisitely curved, arched insteps; but she knows nothing of all this, she only feels ashamed of her squalid clothing and appearance, and sits down under the shade of a tree in view of the small iron door.

Meanwhile, Clement Woodleigh struggles violently with his two antagonists. Were it not that he would not have the red stain of murder upon his soul, he would have dashed both upon the floor, and have then made his escape.

"Listen to me," he says, sternly. "I give you one chance. I shall place you both, one in each corner of the room, and if either stirs until I leave this place, I will not be answerable for the consequences."

"Ten thousand fends!" shrieks the man, "the jade has got away. She will go to the earl! and then where is our money!"

"Be quiet, will you!" roars Clement Woodleigh, and as he speaks he gives both a vigorous push on to the low flock bed.

So surprised are they, that they do not recover for a minute, and when they do so, it is to find that the painter has left the room, and has locked the door behind him!

As he stands outside the door, Clement Woodleigh pauses for an instant.

Has he not done rather a risky thing? he asks himself, in inducing this young girl to leave? Should he not rather have represented matters as they really were, to her father and family, instead of taking upon himself the responsibility of present guardianship of a lovely and nobly-born young girl.

He tries to save his conscience by saying that he acted upon the impulse of the moment.

Suddenly he remembers his friend is in the wood, waiting for him. And what a time he has lost!

The thought rouses the painter into action, and he, rapidly descending the stairs, gropes his way through the dark passage, and again gains the sunlight.

As long as he lives Clement Woodleigh feels sure he shall never forget the vision that meets his gaze as he emerges from the dark passage and shuts the little iron door behind him.

Hearing the sound of his approaching footsteps, Isola has arisen, and stands beneath the shade of the spreading magnolia tree, a bough of which she reaches up to, and nervously grasps in her hand.

The sunbeams peep through the interstices of the leaves, and glint upon the night of her hair. She leans slightly forward with flushed cheeks, sparkling eyes, and rosy parted lips.

The wild flowers kiss her naked feet, and the polished, bare, rounded arms might have been modelled for those of a Venus.

"Well!" she says in a hushed tone.

"They are both locked into the room where I found you. Do you still really wish to come away?" he asks, half hesitatingly.

"Yes; yes!" says the girl, excitedly, coming forward. "Will you take me to my father? I am sure he cannot be aware of the way in which I have been treated."

"Come," he simply says, "I shall take you to your father."

They walked together through the silent woodlands; Clement Woodleigh occasionally looking furtively at the wood nymph by his side.

So beautiful a creature he had never seen; she was rich in Nature's two best gifts—beauty and youth.

"You have not told me yet where you are taking me first," she said, half timidly, looking up at him.

"I want you to come to a dying woman who asked to see you."

"Asked to see me?" she repeats, slowly, and half wonderingly. "Why, who can know anything about me?"

"This woman, who had been attacked in the

wood, and whom my friend, Sir Mervyn Petherick and I found in a dying state, seemed to know all about you. She said she knew you were at Brakeholme Towers, and in accordance with her directions I came to look for you."

"How good of you." She looks up gratefully in his face as she speaks, and Clement Woodleigh feels his heart beat faster.

Given: a lovely July afternoon, shadowy woodland paths, a young, artistically-natured man walking by the side of a beautiful and unsophisticated maiden, and are not the chances very much in favour of their falling in love?

Suddenly, Clement Woodleigh paused and looked around him with a puzzled expression.

"I am not quite sure that we have come the right way," he says. "I have never been here before."

"I am sorry I cannot help you," she replies, regretfully; "but I never was allowed out of the courtyard. I know nothing of the park. I have often wished to walk through it, and promised faithfully to come back, but they always hindered me."

He gazes at her in some surprise.

"You shall tell me all about it again," he says, gently. "At present, we must give our whole attention to trying to find where I left my friend."

Certainly, it seems as though they have taken a wrong path, for there is no sign of Sir Mervyn or the woman.

"What is that?" suddenly asks the girl, shrinking back, and pointing to something which she has espied through the leafy screen of the thicket.

Clement Woodleigh peers through the branches, and sees—oh, joy!—his own easel and stool.

He explains to her what the objects are, and they hurry onwards, for he knows that he left his friend in the shade of the thicket at the other side of the open space.

It is not easy to break through the hedge, therefore they are obliged to walk on until they come to the end of the path, a proceeding which much annoys the impatient painter.

"Hallo! Mervyn!" and then he gives a loud whistle. "I am coming at last!"

But there is no answering voice—no answering whistle.

Again and again he calls, and were it not that his own property is there staring him in the face, Clement would be tempted to think again that he had come to the wrong place.

The open greensward is gained, and the painter hurries to the scene of the poor woman's disaster.

The woman and the child have disappeared, and there lies, with his eyes closed, Sir Mervyn Petherick, his head in a pool of blood.

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

THE great South American earthquake of May, 1877, was felt at the Pultowa Astronomical Observatory in Russia, producing a tremor in an instrument with which an observer was watching a star. This appears from a report recently communicated to the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences.

PROFESSOR SIMON NEWCOMB, the American astronomer, has been awarded his medal by the Haarlem Society of Sciences, in the Netherlands, for having distinguished himself, within the last twenty years, in an exceptional manner by his researches and discoveries in astronomy.

The singular announcement comes from Tarbes, in France, that houses may be protected from lightning by attaching bundles of straw to sticks or broom handles and fastening them upright on the roof. It is stated that there have been no accidents in eighteen communes of the Tarbes district since all the houses were furnished with this supposed protection; but it is certain that there would have been any such accidents without the bundles of straw?

ON an afternoon recently, Mr. Robert Battersby, Lakefield, county Meath, exhibited in the lake at the Zoological Gardens, an apparatus which he has invented and patented, designed for aquatic pleasure, or the saving of life. The invention is shaped like a horse, and is propelled in one case on the screw, and in another on the paddle system. It is ridden just as a horse, and when put in motion moves on slowly and regularly. It is stated that the utility of the invention in rough water will be tried at Kingstown.

THE "WEBSTER" BURNER.—A new burner, known as the "Webster," after the name of the patentee, Mr. Webster, C.E., has recently been introduced. It is constructed so as to regulate the pressure of gas, causing it to flow equally, without that spasmodic action which often takes place. By means of small orifices placed at certain angles to each other, a hollow flame is caused, which, by inducing a current of air through the burning gas, offers the advantages of an argand chimney, without the drawback of breakage. Owing to the arrangement of the holes, and the general construction of the burner, perfect combustion and incandescence are effected, together with a maximum of light and a minimum of heat and smoke. Globe shades and triangles are made for use with the new burner.

SOUNDING THE ATLANTIC.—Commander W. S. Schley, of the United States steamer "Essex," has, says the "Scientific American," reported to the Secretary of the American Navy that he has successfully run a line of soundings from St. Paul de Loanda, Africa, to Cape Frio, Brazil, via St. Helena. The greatest depth found between Africa and St. Helena was 3,063 fathoms, or 13,376 feet; and between St. Helena and Brazil the greatest depth was 3,294 fathoms, or 13,704 feet (nearly three and three-quarter miles). The soundings taken eastward and westward of St. Helena exhibited in profile that that island stands almost perpendicular, in nearly 12,000 feet of water. After leaving the coast of Africa there is an abrupt descent of 900 fathoms in the first sixty miles from the coast, deepening up to 3,000 fathoms in a distance of about 700 miles, whence to St. Helena gradual reductions in depth occur, and an entire change takes place in the character of the bottom from mud to coral, rock, and sand.

ATTEMPTS have been made by anthropologists to trace some connection between the Bushmen of South Africa and the prehistoric race which has left so much evidence of its former existence in the ancient caves of Southern and Western Europe. The rock paintings of the Bushmen have been particularly studied with reference to this supposed relation. They disclose considerable talent and would undoubtedly repay further study than has yet been bestowed on them. Unfortunately, however, they are rapidly being destroyed. The South African herdsmen drive their sheep and cattle into the caves in which are the pictures, and these animals, huddled together and scrambling about, rub them out. In order to preserve some record of them, Mr. Stow, of the South African Geological Survey, has drawn over thirty cartoons of the best of these paintings he has met with, employing an active young Bushman to hunt for them while he prosecutes his geological work. He hopes to add largely to his copies, and thus secure valuable material for the examination of ethnologists at home.

PARTRIDGES AND GROUSE.—A correspondent writes that a few days ago the gamekeeper on the Rannagulzion moors, Aylth, had his attention called by his dog to a nest on which was a partridge. When the bird was dislodged, it was found that she was sitting on a grouse nest of five grouse eggs. In the course of a few days the partridge laid fifteen eggs beside the grouse eggs. Immediately on the five young grouse appearing the male partridge took charge of the alien family, while the female bird still sat on her own eggs and hatched them.



[THE SPIDER'S WEB.]

THE WHISPERS OF NORMAN CHASE.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Receive what cheer you may.
The night is long that never finds the day.

MACBETH.

AUGUSTA had gone from Norman Chase, but neither, in the first instance, to Fairleigh Manor nor to the old woodland Grange. Gilbert Green had said to her:

"Miss Fairleigh, we are really only your servants; but that you should remain here is now impossible. Where will you go?"

"Why not to the Manor?"

"You have too many servants there. One of them is Anthony Maxwell's agent. Which, I do not know. You heard of a bottle being picked up in the passage?" he answered.

"The laurel-water? Yes," she replied.

"It was originally intended for you. But Mr. Mathew Drake borrowed it from his friend, Mr. Anthony Maxwell. And Mr. Anthony Maxwell, I repeat, has his confidential sycophant there, in the Fairleigh service. He is not the man to do his work by halves."

Here Gilbert Green said something in a low tone to his wife.

"No!" she cried, passionately, clasping his arm. "It would kill me, Gilbert! Gilbert!" she went on, with even more vehemence, "would you see me lying dead at your feet?"

"Heaven help me!" was all he said.

"Mr. Stanley Hope is no longer at the Lodge," presently remarked his wife. "Would Miss Fairleigh be safe there?"

"Too near the Manor," he answered. "Unless, indeed, we could both be there. But I cannot see my way to resigning my desk at Lyon's

Inn. I have a dear master, you know, whom I must keep an eye upon."

"There is Caroline."

"Ah, she is a weazel for watching. We will put her on guard."

Thus it fell out that Miss Augusta Fairleigh found herself an inmate of the pretty Lodge which Stanley Hope, though its nominal master, had ceased to occupy. It was with a sweet sadness that she looked around and felt, so to speak, that he had been there, reading those books, perhaps, gathering those flowers, touching that music.

The house was daintily furnished, in complete accordance with her own taste, and, notwithstanding the ever-haunting fear that oppressed her, the shadow was broken by a beam of light.

Gilbert Green and his wife left her seated at the open window of a gay little morning room.

"Your maid shall come to you," said the woman.

In a few moments the door opened. Augusta Fairleigh looked up.

Confronting her demurely, with a gentle obeisance, stood the young girl with whom she had seen Stanley Hope coquetting. She rose indignantly, asking:

"Who are you, and what are you doing here?"

"If you please, miss, I am Caroline, Mr. Gilbert Green's daughter, and I am to wait upon you."

"You can tell Mr. Gilbert Green that I require none of your services, and that I shall not remain here. Whatever happens, I am going to the Manor."

In vain they besought her to explain. She absolutely refused to give a reason for her conduct.

She would not even permit the presence of the young girl in the same room with her. For, a strange thought entered her mind.

What if they were frightening her by false alarms? What even if they were intriguing to

secure for their daughter the hand of Stanley Hope?

This might afford a clue to their desire that she should remain isolated and subject to their counsels.

Then, that shutting her up in the rooms behind a pretended dummy door? Ah! it was clear now.

Without uttering a word about her suspicions—how early cankered that youthful heart must have been to entertain them!—she declared her intention of reaching Fairleigh Manor that evening.

The wife of Gilbert Green actually knelt and wept to dissuade her; but the demoniac passion called Jealousy had rankled the beauty of her nature, and she would go—and go alone.

What, again, was the crime in which Gilbert Green confessed to having had a share? She would not ask. Her pardon had been given, and the Great Seal itself could not make it more complete.

Augusta, though now an unjust, was always a generous girl.

But her resolve was taken, and she acted upon it.

That night saw her drive up to the Manor Gates.

To her astonishment the whole front of the mansion was brilliantly lighted up; music clashed out of the open windows; a sound of many voices mingled with its harmony, and Augusta Fairleigh felt as a stranger, when, unheeding a servant who half barred her way, she once more entered her own paternal home.

Straight up the stairs she went, straight through a suite of rich reception rooms, made graceful by her girlish taste, straight on to where she instinctively knew the host of the evening would be found.

People made way for her, amid a flutter of surprise.

Who was this young girl in the Duchess hat, blue plume, white dress, and air of angry determination, who passed along among them as

though the very ground belonged to her—as, indeed, it did?

It was a little oval room, draped in cherry colour, with couches and chairs of white velvet, ceilinged as if by a canopy, and illuminated by four exquisite vase-shaped lamps.

Evidently a dramatic episode of one kind or another was expected, for a number of guests came crowding after her.

She did not bestow so much as a glance upon them.

But there was one who entered the house at the same time with herself, though by a different door, whom she would have ordered to quit, more peremptorily, perhaps, than any of the other strangers.

Excepting three.

Anthony Maxwell, gorgeously dressed, and laughing coarsely, lolled in his own ungainly manner on one of her Grecian couches, and Mathew Drake sat gnawing his finger nails at a little distance away.

And, bearing a silver tray loaded with glasses of liquor, was Charlotte Cooper.

A sudden silence fell upon the assembly—a speechless surprise seized the two conspirators—a look of terror spread over the face of the charming handmaiden, as Augusta Fairleigh stepped into the midst of this extremely select circle. Anthony Maxwell rose, and the young girl deliberately faced him.

"What are you doing here, Mr. Maxwell?" she said. "And you, Mathew Drake? Your place, as Miss Hedley told you, is downstairs. Send all these people away, and get yourselves gone out of my house as quickly as you can." Then she saw how fallacious her courage had been.

In all that throng there was no single friend—only the parasites of the newly rich man and his hideous associate.

Not a word was spoken; but Charlotte Cooper eyed the young girl with an exulting grin. She looked round.

The door by which she had entered was shut. Beside herself there were only Charlotte, Drake and Maxwell in the room.

"She is mad!" shouted Maxwell, laying his hand upon her shoulder. She sprang away from his touch.

But what would they do?

She was alone. No one could bring her assistance now.

"My dear child," said Maxwell, who, little as he cared for her, could not subdue a sense of gross admiration as she confronted them with her fearless innocence. "You remember when you had this room built. You loved your own voice and sang here, as you said, to your own soul, allowing not an echo of that voice to float through the walls. It was selfish on your part, Miss Fairleigh. Try now if a scream will be heard outside that door."

This he said in a tone of insolent mockery, continuing:

"No Stanley Hope now to knock down the aggressor. No nice little retreat in a wood. No pretty creature to play runaway while making herself up to fascinate our faithless Stanley."

Still she did not speak. What could be done?

They knew the secret of that room, beyond which no sound could pass.

Caught in the trap of her own delicious vanity, the epicurean young egotist too late remembered that, in keeping all her sweetness to herself, she had silenced also, practically, the voice of her own fear.

Charlotte Cooper took her rudely by the arm. "You have come here to please yourself," she said, "and you will now stay to please other people. This way, Augusta."

Augusta shook her off, as though she had been a wasp.

She was seeking a way out of this terrible dilemma.

Nothing suggested itself.

No mercy was to be expected from either of those men.

Still less, if possible, from that gloating and malignant girl.

There was another door opposite to that through which she had come.

It was towards this that Charlotte would have dragged her.

At this instant it partially opened, and, while the two men, with their mercenary, were enjoying her state of petrified fear, she saw a face which had about it something familiar to her eyes, and yet which, assumedly, she had never seen before.

It beckoned once, as if in an affirmative manner, and was gone.

The door closed.

"Take her away," said Maxwell.

Charlotte Cooper motioned her to follow, and Augusta obeyed.

Some intuitive feeling told her that it might be wise to conceal her fears and oppose only a passive resistance to these criminals, who had her in their power.

It was, perhaps, the most momentous resolution she had ever taken in her life.

Before leaving the room, however, she suddenly asked, addressing no one in particular:

"Where is Lady Kennett?"

"Gone to look for her truant ward, my love," answered Maxwell, trying to take her hand.

She eluded him, and he desisted.

Charlotte Cooper conducted her to a chamber which she also remembered as one of her own fancies.

It was floored and lined with cedar, the scent of which, however, had been neutralised by some chemical preparation.

"Well," she thought, upon being left alone. "I always did want to explore this part of the house. I wonder how long I shall be left undisturbed."

The girl had left a lamp, and, pointing to an inner door, said:

"Your bed is in there. Sweet dreams, Augusta! Here is your supper."

And with a gesture of ridicule was gone. Augusta looked at the table. It was invitingly spread.

Three taps were sounded on the wall.

"I know that of old," she said to herself. "It is someone at the panel. Perhaps that face I saw."

The panel had no secret for her. At a touch it flew open.

There, in a small recessed enclosure, was the perfect fac simile, service and all, of the supper laid out on the table.

On a plate lay a card with the words:

"Change the trays. Touch nothing that they give you. Remember Esther Drake."

Instinct told her to accept the advice of this secret friend.

Which she did, not without shuddering, however, at the thought of the mortal dangers with which she was encompassed.

She tried the door of the cedar chamber. It was, as she anticipated, locked on the outside, but it could be bolted from within.

"Another yellow door," she thought. "But not such an enticing room. I wonder what is in that old wardrobe."

It was a massive piece of furniture, full of curious drawers containing dusty papers. In mere idleness of mind, the young girl began turning them over, first securing herself against intrusion by shooting the bolts. Presently a name attracted her.

It was her own, written on the envelope of a small package, fastened by a large seal.

"Of course I may open it?" she said to herself. "It is addressed with my name if not to me."

She opened the packet. It contained, to begin with, a very worn ship-letter that had evidently been soaked in sea water, written on rice paper, and almost illegible.

That which she was able to decipher simply stimulated her curiosity.

"Augusta is a beautiful child. * * * He already loves Evelyn, however. She, also, is beautiful—but different * * * Let him pay the penalty. Love her and find her not his own * * * Her mother * * * Let him keep his awful secret if he can * * * Augusta shall be rich."

And so on—sufficient to perplex without enlightening.

There was no signature; but an Indian post-mark testified to the place where the letter had been written.

Was she dreaming? Visions of a far off infancy unfolded themselves, either in her imagination or her memory—she could not tell which. She felt for a time as if some second life had belonged to her—a dim and distant picture of white marble palaces, swathed and turbaned figures crowded upon steps that led down to a river of yellow waters, red-topped palanquins, and led a mighty pile of wood that smoked and threw up crimson flames!

There was a man who struggled to fling himself into the great wavering mass of fire.

Was this some glimpse of her forgotten youth? Or was it no more than a fantastic association of ideas conjured up by that Indian letter?

Thoroughly excited now the young girl gave no thought to sleep, but went on ransacking the wardrobe.

The fragments of an old newspaper brought under her eye another name that induced her to examine it more particularly. It was that of "Henry Mainwaring."

"The apostate," it said, "pretended that he would burn with her. It is now stated that, having collected her ashes, he flung himself, with them, into the Ganges. A more probable thing is that he has left for England, under an assumed name. His daughter, Augusta, a mere infant, will be brought up in her uncle's name, and be his heiress."

The cold light of morning found Augusta repeating, in her sleep, the incidents of her waking dream.

A knocking at the door disturbed her, however. She opened it, and Charlotte, casting a look of inquiry round the room, entered with a tray.

"Your little adventure hasn't spoiled your appetite, Augusta," she said, with an evil smile. "Mr. Maxwell sends his love, and will visit you presently."

No sooner was the door closed upon her than again came the three raps.

"Another scene from the Arabian nights," laughed Augusta to herself as she changed the trays. Once more, there was a card.

"Ask him to dine with you."

When Mr. Maxwell presented himself the young girl so far suppressed her loathing as to offer him a seat.

The dinner had been brought in and duly exchanged.

"You will forgive me if I sit down to it at once," she said, in an airy manner. But will you not join me?" she added. "It will be more cheerful than dining alone. Come."

How she hated him at that moment! His coward face was literally bleached, as taking up the whole paraphernalia of Augusta's mid-day meal, he would have flung it with an oath out into the corridor, but the young girl prevented him.

"You don't trust your own cook, Mr. Maxwell," she said, with a look that made him quail. "You need not have been afraid. I fear those dishes no more than I fear you."

He was obviously bewildered. After a long pause, however, during which she never took her eyes off him, Augusta said:

"Do you want to marry me or murder me, Mr. Maxwell?"

CHAPTER XL.

But there's an attribute of woman
Ere books were writ and minstrels sung;
Most unheroically common,
Both plain and pretty have a tongue. SCOTT.

MR. MAXWELL did not answer. His mind was in a whirl.

Much as he had taunted his friend Mathew Drake with loving Evelyn Hedley, he now felt a similar passion for his dauntless young captive who resembled her in so many respects. But what perplexed him was her courage, and the impunity which she had enjoyed under the

scientific ministrations prepared for her between himself and Charlotte Cooper. With one more wistful look, he left her.

"No more of that," he said, meeting that accommodating young person, bearing a tray. "Take it down again; I won't hurt her if it can be helped. But I can't make it out. Nothing seems to have disagreed with her."

Now, this young lady, Miss Charlotte Cooper, as she styled herself among her humbler acquaintance, had a little plot of her own to work out, which did not fit in well with Mr. Anthony Maxwell's new-born tenderness for Augusta Fairleigh.

It may as well be explained at once, that this little plot involved neither more nor less than her own marriage with Mr. Anthony Maxwell. Pretending, therefore, to obey him, she took down the tray, did a little doctoring on her own account, and brought up another.

"Why do you stare at me in that way, girl? Put that down, and leave the room," said Augusta.

For the handmaiden had been actually startled by her appearance as she unbolted the door.

Her face was brilliant with health. Not even the confinement to those narrow rooms seemed to have affected her.

Muttering something between her teeth, Charlotte went away, and Augusta dined in comfort and safety.

"I wouldn't escape if I could," she said, to herself, "while there is a cranny in that old wardrobe unexamined."

There were hundreds of documents, for the most part, however, of no interest to her. Still, with an unwearying patience, she read on. At length another Indian letter turned up, only partially decipherable.

She made out a few phrases which sent strange throbs to her heart:

"I enclose you Augusta's portrait. She is very lovely, but her mother seems to hate her, and is determined upon coming out to you. I have done all I can. I remember, as Miss Fairleigh, she would never be controlled. Your idea is startling; but its very boldness may bring about its success. If she comes I will accompany her."

No name; no date; Augusta felt as travellers do when suddenly emerging upon the peak of a mountain, they see the clouds beneath their feet.

Her next discovery was her own portrait, folded in paper. It was the sweet countenance of a child.

Augusta could not forbear a smile as she saw the tender reflection of herself.

She looked at it long and wonderingly, and once more that mirage of the mind returned, and there was visible to her soul the same picture of minarets, cupolas, dark-visaged men, and dusky young girls, carrying water-jars upon their heads, graceful as sculpture.

Listlessly turning over the portrait, some written words caught her eye.

In an instant, she had read them, and it was as if she had passed into another stage of existence.

"She is ten years old to-day, and so far distant from me. He is right. She must go to school, and I rather like the German idea. Dear child, you little know who has been kissing your portrait."

"H. M."

There was nothing else, that she could find, at any rate, in the ancient wardrobe.

Keeping, therefore, concealed in her bosom the scraps having reference, she felt convinced, to herself, Augusta Fairleigh replaced all the others, but the question came into her mind while thus employed:

"Is it Augusta Fairleigh? Who was Miss Fairleigh? And what German school? I never was at one. And who is H. M? Ah! Heavens! Then he lies murdered at Norman Chase!"

All that night she lay awake, torturing herself with doubts, problems, and conjectures of the wildest kind.

By the morning, however, a resolve was formed. She would appeal to the unknown protector in writing, since he never would show his face.

Accordingly, before it was time for Martha to bring in the first meal of the day, she wrote a pencil on a slip of paper these words:

"You must mean me well. Cannot I be told who you are, and how long this is to last? I am mad to get out. "AUGUSTA FAIRLEIGH."

"If it is Fairleigh," she once more, as though unconsciously, uttered aloud.

"So this accounts for your charmed life, Miss Augusta Fairleigh, if it is Fairleigh," said Charlotte Cooper, seizing her arm and swinging her, with virago strength, away from the panel, leaving it open.

Before the terrified young girl could attempt resistance she was dragged to the door, and out into the passage, where Charlotte, seizing a ring that hung by a chain, sent a brazen clamour through the house that speedily brought Mr. Mathew Drake and Mr. Anthony Maxwell bounding up the stairs.

But before they reached the spot Augusta had wrenched herself out of her captor's grasp, and stood, in her angry beauty, unquailing before them.

Still, her dauntless demeanour was only superficial; she knew they had sought her life, and derived little hope from the revolting professions of Mr. Anthony Maxwell.

But life was sweet, and she had, she felt, a new purpose in it now.

She said, therefore, without any great irascibility of tone:

"Mr. Maxwell, affecting the regard for me that you do, why do you allow me to be insulted by your ugly minion there?"

Now, albeit there was little grace and less tenderness about Charlotte Cooper, she certainly was not ugly; but Augusta had taken good aim and morally stabbed her to the heart.

The girl explained what had occurred, with a falsehood to finish it.

"And I saw the face of a man," she added.

"A little change of air will be necessary, my dear," said Maxwell, as they re-entered the room.

The panel was closed, nor could they, with all their patience and ingenuity, detect where it existed.

"Never mind," said Maxwell. "We will accommodate you with another set of apartments. This way, my beauty."

She followed them mechanically, bitterly repenting her own carelessness, which had allowed the spy to enter.

"The stone room?" said that gentle janitor.

"By no means," interrupted Anthony Maxwell, "the Lyre room; there are no panels in that."

This had been another of Augusta's costly little ideals.

The chamber was, in shape, like a Grecian Lyre, with a broad ottoman of blue silk running round it, even across the door, opposite to which, at the other end, was another, opening into a bedroom into which the two men had the grace not to follow when Charlotte Cooper led the way.

That angelic being was waiting for her revenge.

"Ugly minion!"

Not all the waters of Babel could wipe out the galling epithet.

She looked at her own face in a mirror and then at Augusta's, and then busied herself with the furniture.

"Ugly minion!" Augusta heard her repeat.

Left alone, the young girl, as by instinct, examined with curious minuteness every detail of her new prison.

In trying to open what appeared to be a door she scratched the little finger of her left hand against the sharp top of a flat-headed, gilt nail.

A single drop of blood followed the childish wound, and with a childish pout, Augusta dipped it into the water-ewer.

It turned out a spotty grey.

The young girl stood looking at it in amazement.

But soon the explanation dawned upon her mind.

"That was meant for my face," she thought. "I was wrong to call Charlotte Cooper an ugly minion."

Meanwhile that clever young creature was congratulating herself upon this notable invention of her malignity.

And Drake and Maxwell were having high words about the disposal of their prisoner.

"Which is it to be?" said Drake. "Mind, if she has any of Evelyn's spirit, she will never marry you. And, until she does, or until she is dead, you are not safe. There, that's plain, I hope."

"I should like to spare her life, if possible," answered Maxwell. "You heard the way in which she appealed to me?"

"It was a woman's artifice. Evelyn would never have done it. But I doubt whether you could save her if you would."

"You mean that you—"

"Not I, but Charlotte."

"Who was it, think you, that changed her food?"

"I have not the faintest notion. Surely, Charlotte could not be mistaken?"

"Impossible. Besides, she denied nothing. We must search and see."

Nothing came of their quest.

Besides those of their malign survivor, they could trace the footsteps of no human being in the whole of Fairleigh Manor.

"There must be an end to it, you know, Maxwell," said Drake, when they were again sitting together, baffled and savage. "I have my own affairs to see after, for don't you think I have given up the game. Do as you said, at your chambers, drug her or drown her, I care not a rap which," he added, with a fearful oath.

"But if I were you I should leave it to Charlotte. She will be quite safe in the hands of that tender-hearted maiden."

"I will make a last effort to-morrow, and then—I may take your advice."

"Take it now," cried Drake, starting from his chair. "Lock the door; set to work; we can have every document ready by the morning. We will put the young lady to sleep for a little time, and when she wakes up tell her roundly that she is Mrs. Anthony Maxwell. She can't deny or doubt it, with the evidence before her. On no account offer her any violence; but stay in her room all night. I and Charlotte will be witnesses to the fact. After that, what becomes of Mr. Stanley Hope?"

"You make a magnificent villain, Drake," remarked his companion. "I drink your health; but, if I thought I stood in your way, I should prefer not to do it, in wine of your decanting. And here's to Mrs. Maxwell."

They sat up all night, and, in the morning, summoned Charlotte, sending her to announce that Mr. Anthony Maxwell was about to pay Miss Augusta Fairleigh a visit. In two or three minutes she returned.

Miss Augusta Fairleigh was nowhere to be found, nor was there the least indication how she had escaped.

"We were wrong to let her come here," said Drake, after the first frenzy of their rage had exhausted itself. "She knows the ins and outs of this house too well. The Moat would have been better."

"For your purposes, not for mine," replied Mr. Anthony Maxwell.

(To be Continued.)

THE POPE.

A new story has got abroad in Rome as an illustration of the economical disposition of the Pope and his determined efforts at retrenchment of the expenses of the Vatican. Leo XIII. was taking a walk in the gardens, when he came across a cow pasturing on one of the hedges. He

asked to whom the intruder belonged. There was a general shrugging of the shoulders amongst his attendants, and the head gardener was called to account for its presence.

"That is the cow," replied he, "from whom your paternity has your fresh milk every morning."

"But I never drink milk," said the Pope.

"Then it must be the cow belonging to the Cardinal Secretary," observed the gardener.

"If Cardinal Franchi wishes to drink new milk in my house," said the Pope, "he must pay for it; he receives his money for this purpose."

Order was at once given for the expulsion of the cow.

HER GUIDING STAR;

OR,

LOVE AND TREACHERY.

CHAPTER XV.

CYRIL, left alone in the study—that place to him so consecrated, where he had first known his own power in the training of an ingenious young mind, and in the harder task of governing his own under influences there first felt, the scene of many happy hours never again to return—yielded without restraint to his emotion.

He perfectly well understood that the confidence reposed in him by Mr. and Mrs. Farleigh, whatever might be his personal claims, was greatly assisted by what they considered the insuperable barriers between him and their daughter, a confidence confirmed by the manner he had carefully and honestly maintained towards her.

He could not, therefore, for an instant be deluded into an idea that they would relax a single prejudice in favour of what they would condemn as a mesalliance.

"Besides," he reflected, "even if they would overlook a humble origin how would they, how must they repel a nameless, unacknowledged—most probably baseborn—son of a father disgraced, perhaps, himself, and disgracing others! No, it was impossible. He would stifle the fondest feeling of his heart rather than subject himself to the indignity such an aspiration would be sure to call down on him."

But this resolution cost him pangs never before known.

The conflict was not, indeed, new to him. From the moment he had felt his growing interest he had striven to repress it.

He had avoided everything that might betray it.

He had even congratulated himself in the belief that Jessie's open, child-like expression of regard for him was proof that she had no stronger interest in him—a belief confirmed by her apparent liking for young Pecham.

He had even voluntarily torn himself away, and had reluctantly promised to return, only in the hope that absence might increase his self-control, considering it permitted to do so if he endangered no one but himself.

But now even a harder battle was to be fought.

He had not to conquer vain desires for an unattainable good, but to reject it when perhaps a bold hand might secure it.

He who had never known love from woman's lips, must he now refuse it from those dearest to him?

He who had never been soothed by the sympathy of mother or sister, must he now reject it from one who could give more even than these?

Must he turn from her who had been the fresh, young, innocent Eve of his imagination.

The confession, so unlooked for, which had at once agonised and delighted him, must it be repulsed and cast away?

For the first time utterly unmanned, he buried his face in the cushion of the sofa, unconscious

that he wept himself.

Startled up, he recollected that Mr. Farleigh was still awaiting the explanation of what now seemed so trivial that it was nearly forgotten, and he hastened to communicate it.

In the relief thus afforded, Mr. and Mrs. Farleigh soon forgave the pain so childishly inflicted.

While they were congratulating themselves, Cyril was left to reflect on his present position, and, with his usual promptitude, to decide what was best—best for himself, best for Jessie. He must go, and go immediately. His first thought was to take no leave, to depart in the evening without explanation.

This, as his luggage was still at the coach-house, would be easy.

But this might subject him to unjust inferences.

It might, too, in some way compromise Jessie.

He determined, therefore, on a course, which, without the utterance of an untruth, would render his departure, if unexpected, not mysterious.

His cogitations were interrupted by an exclamation from Mr. Farleigh.

"Bless me! we are entirely forgetting everything else in our own affairs. I have never asked after my old friend Mr. Fairfax; tell me, is he well? does time make much impression on him?"

"So little," replied Cyril, "that really I never think of it. His early hours, regular habits, and quiet pursuits prevent wear and tear."

"I suppose so. Yet he is nearly my age—not far from fifty. Poor Fairfax! he was a handsome man once."

Cyril thought the sigh with which this was uttered uncalled for, and replied, "He is so still, sir; and no one would imagine from his manners or appearance that he had been so long out of the world."

"Ah! indeed! But the inborn, inbred gentleman is a strong plant, not to be choked by the vulgar weeds that may start up around it. Well, now, to matters nearer home. When shall lessons begin? Jessie has had a long holiday, and will, I daresay, be glad to resume them."

This was the moment Cyril had been nerving himself to meet.

"I am grieved to say," replied he, "that I can remain only long enough to say farewell."

"Farewell!" echoed both Mr. and Mrs. Farleigh in the same breath; "farewell! what! really leave us? and why?"

In a few words Cyril informed them that he was compelled to do so, adding, with a poor attempt at a smile:

"You know, sir, if we cannot control circumstances, they must control us."

His manner was so decided, and being, at the same time, as calm as they could expect under what he did not hesitate to confess was a very painful separation, that happily the idea of a sudden determination did not occur to them, and their good-breeding spared all interrogations as to reasons which he did not voluntarily offer.

Mr. Farleigh only said, with much earnestness, that, if pecuniary considerations influenced him, he would make any additional compensation he would name. He graciously added that:

"Jessie owed more to his instruction than to all she had ever previously received."

This generosity, at this moment, was too much for Cyril, and he did not immediately reply.

"You are too kind, sir, too kind, to attach so much value to my small services. Believe me, money should not part us. I have always been and am still, perfectly satisfied with what I have received."

Mrs. Farleigh, too, with much cordiality, expressed her regret, her sense of the benefit conferred on Jessie, and the difficulty of replacing his ability and care.

"Well, if you must leave us, Mr. Ashleigh," said Mr. Farleigh, "we must not consider it a final separation; something may bring us together again. I shall always be happy to serve

you in any way that I can, and to testify to your faithfulness, and to your correct and becoming behaviour in my family during nearly an entire year that you have lived with us."

At this certificate of character, much the same as would have been accorded to any approved domestic, it must be confessed Cyril's pride rebelled.

The colour returned to his cheek from which emotion had driven it; but he forgave the unintentional insult.

At that moment he could not do otherwise; yet it fixed, as with an iron grasp, into his soul the conviction of the scorn with which his love would be repulsed; and he blessed Heaven that he had not been so weak as to expose himself to it.

He only by a bow returned his acknowledgments.

"But you will not leave us immediately?"

"To-night, sir," said Cyril, with a resolution for which he was probably indebted to Mr. Farleigh's proposed "recommendation." "I shall walk to town in the evening, for, having no luggage to transport, I shall not need to put your horses into requisition."

This met with much opposition, and it was not without reiterated assurances that he really preferred it that it was assented to.

"I don't know what Jessie will say to all this," said Mrs. Farleigh, kindly. "She will be much disappointed."

Cyril allowed himself no reply, except that, with the progress Miss Jessie had made, she would require little direction in future."

But, under this quiet exterior, how did his heart beat at thought of the parting now so near!

The striking of the clock announced the approach of dinner, and he listened with a sickened feeling for her footstep on the stairs.

But when assembled at table, instead of herself came a whispered message to Mrs. Farleigh.

"Jessie has a bad headache, my dear, and begs to be excused."

"A headache!" replied her husband. "I never knew her to have one in her life. What has she been doing?"

"Oh," said Mrs. Farleigh, innocently, "you know she must have had rather an exciting scene with Captain Vivian this morning."

"True, true," replied he, laughing, "and 'tis but a fair punishment for the heartache she gave him. Besides, I daresay she is rather ashamed to appear after such a silly business; and well she may be."

"But," added he, gravely, "it is just as I have said; no care, no restraint keeps young people in order in these days. Now her mother, Mr. Ashleigh, would no more have dared so to trifle with a gentleman than she would have presumed to laugh in the king's face. I don't know what we are coming to! No respect to age, dignity, nor condition! Young people think they may say, think, do anything they please!"

Mrs. Farleigh took advantage of the first pause in her husband's outpouring, to say:

"I think, Mr. Ashleigh, I will not tell Jessie just now that you are going. She will sleep off her headache, I daresay, and be able to bid you good-bye."

Cyril blessed the headache and the delay, devoutly hoping to escape without putting her to the test of a farewell.

In the afternoon, to conceal, if he could not check, the feeling that increased as the final hour approached, he strolled off into the woods that at a short distance screened the house, and yielded, when thus in security, to the thoughts that oppressed him.

The past, checkered as it was by conflicts, fears, and doubts peculiar to his strange position, had yet had one bright light thrown athwart it.

One exquisite delight had been granted him. He had known what it was to love and to be loved; and, short as had been the joy, and compassed with obstructions, it had repaid him for many sorrows.

He would not part with it to secure immortality from all earthly ill.

But the future, what did that offer? A hopeless remembrance of one by whom, if true to his sense of right, he must pray to be forgotten.

"Forgotten! oh, the dreadful import of that word!

Even in the grave—cold, insensible, dissolving—we cannot bear it; it adds the keenest pang to death.

Even in heaven, we crave to be remembered on earth!

What, then, was it to a young heart throbbing with passions newly awakened, with wants that would not be denied, conscious of its power to enjoy and to create happiness, of its own inherent right to it—what was it to such a one to set a seal on the fountain of bliss, to turn away from hope, to reject love, to pray to be forgotten? Yet this Cyril felt to be his future.

Long, long he wandered; revolving every circumstance since first he had known Jessie. At one moment rebuking his own coldness as cruel, the next rejoicing in it as their only safety.

Now dwelling on her sweet unconsciousness, her ingenious confession, her maidenly dignity when aware that it was unsought; and then turning to the present, the parting moment.

The slanting lights that streamed beneath the branches, and the long shadows warned him to return, and, with indescribable dread, he bent his steps towards the house.

With a sad longing for one more look he entered the study by the garden door, and cast a glance at every familiar object, as if taking the superfluous trouble of fixing them indelibly in his memory.

At length his eye fell on the study-table, where, among scattered books, lay an unopened letter.

He took it hastily up, the first thought being that it was a farewell from Jessie.

He turned to the superscription. It was directed to himself, but not in her own hand. He opened it, and the change in his countenance sufficiently indicated the revulsion in his feelings.

It was as follows:

"Rash, obstinate young man! Again you have perilled yourself and those who ought to be even dearer to you. Return without delay to the security provided for you, or involve yourself in consequences you will for ever repent. Obey!"

The feelings with which Cyril had been struggling for hours, now taking another direction, burst forth like a tempest.

He threw the letter on the floor.

He stamped on it.

He caught it up, and was about to tear it in pieces, when a thought seemed to check him.

"No!" exclaimed he, "it shall remain till the day of reckoning comes. 'Security provided for me!' and by whom? Not by him who cast me a beggar on the charity of strangers. 'Obey!' and whom? Not him whose forfeited word has no claim on me. Oh, that I could stay here and brave him! that honour did not demand my departure! I would fearlessly encounter his threats.

"Intolerable! that by going I shall seem to act in obedience to commands that I scorn and reject. Oh, that I could tell him to his teeth that I am not his slave and puppet, to be controlled and played as he may please! I, a man, competent to be treated like a reasonable being, to be thus addressed like a boy or a idiot!"

Ring the bell, he inquired of the servant who answered it who had left a letter for him?

Nobody.

Could no one have entered without his knowledge?

No, he had been occupied in or near the hall.

But the study?

Ah! yes, there a person might have entered through the garden.

The servant was too trusty to be suspected of collusion, and on farther inquiry the other domestics were equally ignorant.

The tea-bell at this moment summoned him, and, compelled to leave the mystery unexplained, he obeyed it.

Mrs. Farleigh, with considerate kindness, had ordered an earlier tea than usual, and more abundant, in preparation for his long walk; and with trembling steps he entered the room where she sat ready to receive him, "for now surely he must meet Jessie!"

Seating himself, as requested by Mrs. Farleigh, he reflected that some little show of natural feeling would be allowed on such an occasion, and thus both he and Jessie might escape a strict construction.

Mrs. Farleigh proceeded to dispense the good things she had ordered, though to little purpose; and, after lamenting that he ate nothing, said, in her kindest tone, desirous of softening the disappointment to him, "I am so sorry, Mr. Ashleigh, that you cannot see Jessie; she is really quite indisposed with this very inopportune headache, and begs me to bid you good-bye for her."

No relief could have been greater.

"She understands me," thought Cyril; "she forbears to add to my distress by either seeing me or questioning my motives. Heaven for ever bless her!"

With this prayer in his heart, and a kind farewell to her on his lips, he rose to take leave, and was soon on his way to town.

* * *

Cyril's unexpected appearance at Meremoor excited no small sensation.

Mr. Fairfax met him at the door with a look of alarm, saying:

"Cyril! has anything happened? Our friends—are they well?"

"Quite so," replied Cyril, assuming a cheerfulness he could not feel, in order to dissipate the uneasiness he had caused. "Quite so, and myself, too, or I shall be as soon as Mrs. Pope gives me one of her good teas."

While the housekeeper's efforts were thus directed, Cyril endeavoured still more to assure Mr. Fairfax by talking with unconcern of his journey, the weather, and other ordinary topics, deferring till left to finish the evening without interruption such explanation as he felt at liberty to give.

The time soon arrived.

"I think," said he, affectionately taking his guardian's hand, "I think, my dear sir, that I have never had a secret from you, and, moreover, I believe you have never distrusted my word?"

"Never," replied Mr. Fairfax, earnestly.

"Never?"

"Then I think you will pardon me if I have one now, and that you will also continue to trust me?"

"Yes, without the least question. Yes."

"I thank you, sir. So far I can satisfy you that, though I have left the family with no intention of returning, my so doing involves no one in the least blame. On the contrary, could I think it right to be more explicit, I know you would approve of what I have done, and be satisfied with all concerned."

"This shall suffice, Cyril. I ask no more," said Mr. Fairfax.

Cyril pressed his hand, and they were both silent.

At length, opening his pocket-book, Cyril drew forth a letter, which he handed to Mr. Fairfax.

"That," said he, "may reconcile you to the step I have taken. I know you have some apprehensions from that quarter, and will be glad that, by apparent submission, I have avoided threatened danger. I say apparent, because I must in truth tell you that the letter had nothing to do with my decision. That was formed before I received it."

"It is extraordinary!" said Mr. Fairfax, after reading and returning the letter, "most extraordinary! How did this letter reach you?"

"Like everything from the same source. I found it where it had been placed for me in my absence. How or by whom I could not discover."

After some reflection Mr. Fairfax continued:

"I do not require to be 'reconciled,' as you say, to your return; but this does diminish any regret I might feel as to the manner of it, for I do not deny that I am often troubled by the threats you are so willing to brave. You, then, for the present, will, I trust, be content to remain here. Thank Heaven! we can be happy in spite of the persecutions by which you are followed."

But Mr. Fairfax was not long in discovering that Cyril was not happy.

The manly cheerfulness worn at first to relieve his friend soon disappeared, and, if occasionally roused to something like his natural animation, it was plainly an effort.

To such alternations he had been subject; but there was now an air of dejection, very different from the fitful moods of previous years, easily explained by the irritation of his peculiar condition.

There was nothing to be gained by questioning him.

The matter, whatever it was, was decided now.

There was no perturbation, no apparent conflict. He occupied himself much as usual; was kind to old friends, and more than ever affectionate to Mr. Fairfax; but a change had come over him, the light of hope and youth seemed extinguished.

Mr. Fairfax observed him with the tenderest solicitude; and one evening when they were alone, Cyril dreamingly gazing at a beautiful moon that sent a beam into their room as if "to pleasure them," he approached, and laying his hand on his shoulder, said, in a gentle, half-playful tone:

"It is asserted that no man is the better for the experience of another; that each must find out the secret of life for himself. Perhaps this is so; but the heart, nevertheless, often longs to impart what it has learned, and I—I would—"

His voice failed, and, turning away, he left the room.

(To be Continued.)

DISCOVERY OF A LARGE CAVE NEAR THE CASTLE OF PICTUR.

THERE was some short time ago a discovery made on the farm of Pitcur, tenanted by Mr. John Grainger, the eminent railway contractor. Mr. Grainger some time during the spring of this year was ploughing with the steam-plough one of his fields to the east of the Castle of Pitcur, near the turnpike road leading between Dundee and Coupar-Angus, when the plough in turning up the soil laid bare a large broad flagstone. This awakened the curiosity of those engaged, and on lifting the stone there was discovered underneath a large open space.

This being communicated to Mr. Grainger, he immediately made arrangements with Mr. George Fisher, contractor, for a search. On Friday last week, Mr. Fisher, with a staff of workmen, proceeded to the spot and made a large opening. On clearing away the rubbish it was discovered to be a large cave, about from seven to eight feet in height, with sides built of solid masonry with stones taken, it is supposed, from an ancient quarry in the neighbourhood. Its full extent has not yet been fully ascertained; 60 feet in length has been cleared out, its extreme breadth being somewhere about 15 feet. There are several passages leading into the cave from various directions.

One to the Castle is considered the most important, and there can be no doubt from its close proximity to the ancient Castle of Pitcur, and its connection therewith, it must have been a resort in times of danger. The Castle of Pitcur, the ancient residence of the Lords of Hallyburton and Pitcur, was, as may be seen from the ruin still standing, a place of some note, situated in a Pass in the Sidlaw Hills, commanding an extensive view of the valley of Strathmore on

the north, and near the old Roman Road that led across the Sidlaws.

Fleur and Hallyburton is now the property of Lord J. F. Gordon Hallyburton, who is descended, in the female line, from the noble house of Huntly. Nothing of any note has as yet been found in the cave, excepting a broken bowl, made of fire clay, with several figures. This, of course, is in the possession of Mr. Grainger.

THE MYSTERY OF RAVENSWALD:

A TALE OF THE FIRST CRUSADE.

CHAPTER XIII.

—A disguised demon, missioned to knit
My soul with under darkness.

ONE of the lamps Cyprian took in his hand, and then moved on to a door of iron, which opened with a wild, sharp creaking that told of little use.

Beyond this point Lionel recognised a place familiar. It was a part of the crypt which he had traversed with Father Clement.

What would they do in this place? Though he had before anticipated violent death, this coming to a place so dark and dismal, and deeply hidden from the eyes of the world, startled him with horror.

Oh, what would he have given for just one moment's freedom of arm, and the grasp of his good sword!

But the blessing was not his. He could only feel the cruel bonds eating into the flesh of his swollen arms and obey the guiding will of the man who led him.

When accompanying Father Clement he had observed a deep, broad recess, upon his left hand, where there was a circle of large pillars appearing as though hewn from the native rock, and in their midst something like an altar.

He remembered that it had been upon his mind to inquire what the curiously arranged place was for, but something else—a sound of mystic character—had withdrawn his attention.

Now he was conducted towards that spot, and before he reached it he saw two other men standing by the altar—that is, they appeared like men, being tall, stout figures, of human shape, enveloped in robes of black, which reached from head to foot, with cowl drawn over their heads far enough to completely hide the features of the face.

Upon the altar, which was a block of hewn granite, with traces of fire in the concavity of its upper surface, as though, at some time, burnt offerings had been served thereon, were two burning tapers, and by their light, as he drew near, the youth could see that fresh dry earth had been thickly spread upon the pavement around a block of wood.

Advancing near to the altar, and nearer to the block, the prisoner was stopped, and in a moment more, from behind one of the pillars, stepped forth a man wearing a robe of dark red, with a red cowl upon his head, and a red mask over his face, bearing in his hand an axe!—an axe with a broad, gleaming blade, and a long, stout helve!

When Lionel saw this, he started back convulsively—started so quickly, and with such strength, that Bertram's hold was broken.

"No! no!" he cried, impetuously. "You have not brought me hither to butcher me! You cannot. You dare not. These very stones would cry out against such fiendish work. Never again could the rest of a conscience at ease be yours. You will not do it!"

Without speaking, Bertram and Cyprian

caught him again, by the arms, after which one of the black-robed figures advanced, and from beneath the drooping flap of his cowl issued a noise which sounded wonderfully like the voice of the grand duke:

"Vain and thoughtless mortal, hast thou not heard the decision of the court, and dost thou not know the law? The penalty has been announced, and it is now to be executed. The penalty of treason is death!"

"The penalty of treason is death!" repeated the others, in tones as deep and dismal as they could command.

"Thou didst have an hour granted thee for contemplation and prayer. If thou art not prepared, the fault is, thine. It were best for thee that thou didst not resist. It were foolish to make death more terrible than it need be. The hour is passed; the time is come. Kneel of thine own accord, and no force will be used. Kneel!"

As the last word fell, a chill blast swept through the pillared recess, and the tapers upon the altar were extinguished; but not long did the darkness continue.

As the chill breath passed away a glare of ghostly quality lighted up the place.

It was like the glow from sulphurous flames, giving a deathly aspect to everything upon which it fell.

Whence it came could not be seen. It was as though the circumjacent atmosphere had become itself luminous.

Then came a deep rumbling sound, as from the bowels of the earth, and the lurid light grew more and more extensive, rolling athwart the crypt in great waves, while the subterranean muttering grew to the volume of distant thunder.

The twain who held the prisoner let go their hold, and started back in alarm, as though impressed on the instant that the work they were helping to do was the cause of this dreadful phenomenon.

The black-robed figure, whose voice had sounded like the voice of Tancred, though startled at first, sought to brace himself, and to lead the others to be not afraid.

When he spoke again his disguise could serve him no more, for the voice of the Lord of Ravenswald was not to be mistaken when pitched to wrathful key; and he made it manifest that his only aim was to accomplish his purpose upon the prisoner.

Let come what would, he did not mean to surrender the opportunity.

It was something nearer to his heart than the rendering of justice—something more than simple vengeance—that moved him in his desire to sweep the youth called Lionel from his path.

He cried:
"Will you let a gust of wind, and a flash of ignited vapour, frighten you from your work! Sir headsman, make ready! Bertram!—Cyprian!—bend the condemned to the block! No senseless flare and racket shall swerve me from my purpose. Down! Down with him, and let the blow be struck!"

In his fiendish wrath the grand duke seemed for the moment to have lost the emotion of fear and terror in view of the unearthly glare that bathed surrounding objects in its ghostly waves, but not so his satellites.

Bertram and Cyprian, when they had felt the chill blast that had extinguished the candles, had been fearfully startled, for it was not the first time they had seen and heard things in that crypt which they firmly believed could not have come from natural cause; and when the sulphurous flame had filled the cavernous space, and the dreadful rumbling from the bowels of the earth had followed, their strength had well nigh left them.

So it was that when their master ordered them to bend the victim to the block, they had not physical power to obey.

Lionel had no longer a doubt of the character of him who had spoken, and when the fierce command had been given, he shook off the weakened, palsied hands of the henchmen, and faced the tyrant.

"Tancred of Ravenswald," he said, proudly, and with undaunted force of manly courage, "in the name of justice, human and divine, I ask thee, why dost thou thus seek my life! What have I done to thee that should call for such a penalty?"

"Base and ungrateful traitor! the charge brought against thee in fair and open court, gives thee answer good and sufficient. Thou didst come into my castle a secret enemy. Thou didst eat my bread, and drink my wine, and accept my bed, and didst then seek to rob me of the dearest treasure of earth. Silence. It was proved—every item of the charge. What ho! Cowards! Cravens! have you lost your wits? We will have a triple execution if I be not speedily obeyed!"

The enraged speaker had moved forward, as though to put his hand upon the prisoner, when the deep rumbling ended in a roar and a crash that shook the solid pillars around. A moment of silence followed the reverberations of the thunder-clap, which was broken by a deep loud voice that seemed to issue from the stout altar.

"Tancred of Ravenswald! Beware! Is there not blood enough already on thy hands. Unnatural brother! blood-stained monster, base usurper! know that thy race is near its close. He whom the spirits of this place protect is beyond thy power of harm. Thou hast been suffered to go thus far that we might see and know what was in thy heart. We have seen! It is enough! The scroll is written, and thy doom is sealed! Spirits of the just and true—Attend!"

As the voice ceased, another crash, more terrific than the first, succeeded, and while yet the reverberations were shaking wall and pavement, the ghostly glare went suddenly out, and in the thick darkness that followed the grand duke was seized by powerful hands and hurled upon the floor of rock with a force that deprived him of sense.

Of the ducal party the second black-robed figure, which proved to be the Baron of Wartenfels, was the first to recover his senses. He saw where Cyprian had set down his lantern in the distance, and he went and brought it. Tancred was found where he had fallen, still insensible.

The others, finding themselves unharmed, lifted their heads and looked around. Their late prisoner was nowhere to be seen, nor did they deem it prudent to search for him.

Bertram and Cyprian, with the assistance of the man in red, picked up the inanimate form of their master, and with Wartenfels in advance with the lantern, they made the best of their way into less ghostly regions.

CHAPTER XIV.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again.

THE stupendous events of the hour had filled Lionel with astonishment and awe, but not with fear.

Instinctively he had felt that powers, unseen, be they what they might, were to him friendly. For him the dark crypt had no terrors.

He felt it to be a sacred place, filled with solemn memories and influences, and if there were suffered to wander in it spirits out of the flesh, they were not for him to dread.

If they had work of vengeance to do, he was not one of the selected victims.

So, when the crash had come, and the mystic voice addressed the duke, he was able to listen; and when the second crash and the darkness had followed, he experienced a sense of relief and safety, and was prepared to submit to whatever power or influence might be brought to bear upon him.

While the dull reverberations of the terrific crash were echoing through the arching vaults our hero was taken by the arms and hurriedly led away.

No word was spoken, nor could his eyes behold anything, yet it seemed to him as though two men conducted him, so, if they went clear of obstructions, he could not well stumble.

A little more pain than there was need of was given to his injured arm, but he did not complain; however, after a little time, an involuntary gasp of distress, accompanied by a corresponding involuntary twitching of the painful limb, gave his conductors a sufficient hint, and the hold upon that side was quickly changed.

On he went, with swift steps, through total darkness—it seemed to him a long, long distance—until finally they stopped, and the hands were removed from his arms.

He waited to hear a voice. He supposed he should at least receive a word of caution, or of direction—but not a breath.

He did not hear departing steps, and yet he knew that he was alone.

There was a sense of utter solitude not to be mistaken.

Where he was he knew not, nor could he feel what was near at hand, for his arms were still pinioned.

But he was not to remain long in suspense. Before he could arrange his thoughts for any well-directed utterance of query or complaint, a light appeared in the distance, in the soft rays of which the tomb of Godfrey could be plainly seen, and very shortly afterwards human beings appeared from beyond the surrounding gloom, and as they came nearer he recognised Father Clement in the tall, commanding figure that walked in front. There were four others with him, two or three of whom carried lighted lanterns.

The emotion with which the old monk caught our hero's hand, and pressed it in a long and ardent embrace, spoke of something deeper and stronger than common friendship.

There was that in the aged face, in the still clear bright eyes, in the slightly quivering lip, and in the changeful colour, from the pallor of dread to the warm flush of grateful joy and jubilation—there was something in it all which gave the youth to feel that he had a rest, safe and sure, in that stout heart.

And as the monk now advanced, with outstretched hands, his eyes gleamed through rich moisture, and his face was eloquent.

He put forth his hands, but Lionel could not return the embrace.

"My son! My son! Thank Him and the holy saints for this! Oh, thou hast cause for deepest gratitude to the watchful spirits that set thee free from Tancred's power. We, who are now with thee, were on our way to watch and wait, never dreaming that the monster would attempt so soon to put his awful plan into execution. We should have been too late; but, thank Heaven! the guardian spirits of the crypt were informed."

"Dear father," said Lionel, after the bond had been removed from his arms, "wilt thou not answer me frankly and trustfully? Were the powers that set me free really disembodied?"

"Does that thought give thee concern at such a time, my son?"

"Ah, good father, thou mayest not see all the thoughts that flow from the wondrous circumstance. They are not all of the curious mould."

"I can believe thee, my son; and in time thou shalt be fully informed. The time will come, I trust, when it will be thy right to demand explanation; but that time is not yet. And now, first, I think thine arm is injured?"

"A slight hurt, and somewhat painful."

"Did they do it?"

"No. I fell. In my narrow prison chamber, early in the day I heard the blast of a trumpet at one of the gates. I built a stand by which to reach the embrasure, and it gave way beneath me; but not, however, until I had seen our good and trusty Rupert, with his comrades, turned away with information that the duke had left the castle, and that I had not returned from my wandering."

"Ay," cried Clement, "and it was the report of Rupert that gave us to comprehend your danger. But we waste time here. Let us on to the abbey, where we may find safe protection, and where your arm may be cared for. And, my son, your presence is required for another matter. Come."

The way was taken which our hero had threaded once before—to the chapel, and thence to the abbey—and from the chapel back to the crypt no trace was left by which mortal man could tell that human feet had traversed the mouldy pavement.

In a dining-room connected with the large refectory were Rupert and Jasper, who, when they saw their young master, were so overcome with joy that they wept aloud.

They were both of them, from their long use in woodcraft and the dangers of the chase, well versed in the healing art, and in their tender, loving hands Lionel's arm was soon placed in a mending way; and while they were swathing the limb, when it had been sufficiently bathed, Master Kenneth made his appearance.

And then there was another scene of rejoicing; and when our hero had resumed his doublet he had to sit down and tell the story of his adventures in the Castle of Ravenswald.

Father Clement had foreseen that he would be questioned by his followers, and had given him full permission to exercise his own judgment in telling the story.

On the present occasion Lionel knew with whom he was talking—knew them for friends tried and true—and he hesitated not to trust them with all the circumstances.

He told how he had found himself a prisoner in the castle—how he had been called before the grand duke, and a few of his sworn tools, and put on trial for what they were pleased to call treason; and he told the items of the charge, and the summing up of the duke. At this point old Jasper spoke:

"Upon my life," he said, shaking his head seriously, "the circumstances were sadly against you, my master. Had the sentence of the court been submitted to the judgment of the emperor, and the evidence set forth as it appeared on trial, he could not have reversed it. Oh, the tyrant had you in his clutches most completely."

"Ay," responded Rupert, "and blessed be the power that interposed."

"Do you know what that interposing power was?" asked Lionel.

"I can guess," answered the forester. "I know what spirits haunt that old crypt, and I know that they have no friendship for Tancred; but I know no more."

"Yes," went on Lionel, "it was those spirits set me free."

And he told the strange story as it had appeared to him.

His hearers listened almost breathlessly to the end, and when all had been told there were many and various conjectures touching the mysterious portions of the narrative, in which latter Rupert took no part.

In the end, however, when they had become lost in the wild entanglement of their own fanciful propositions, the old forester was directly appealed to.

"Rupert," said Kenneth, "you know something of this matter. You were used to this forest in the other years, and visited the Castle of Ravenswald during the reign of the noble Godfrey. Will you not tell us what you have in mind of the matter?"

"You would ask me," queried the old man, thoughtfully, "what I know of the mysterious sounds and appearances in the old crypt of the castle?"

"Yes—that is it, exactly."

"Well," continued Rupert, with a slow movement of the hands as though he would shake from them all responsibility, "I know nothing—comparatively nothing. I only know that certain things are."

"The first real appearance was to Tancred himself, less than a year ago. Before that there had been strange sounds, and men had seen

ghostly forms flitting to and fro in the dim obscurity; but at the time of which I speak, Tancred, in company with two of his knights—one of whom was Sir Kotzling (and from him I had the story)—were down one evening in the crypt.

"They had gone down upon hearing a report that the figure upon the tomb of Godfrey had been broken. They found the tomb intact and were upon the point of turning away when a clap of thunder shook the ponderous rocks, and in the midst of a lurid glow of ghostly light, directly by the side of the tomb, appeared the form of a powerful knight, clad in armour from top to toe.

"His casque was of burnished gold, with a visor of the same metal completely covering the face; but the presence spoke, and it claimed to be the voice of Godfrey; and its speech was of solemn warning to the duke.

"With a cry of horror Tancred sank upon the pavement—sank down low and grovelling—and when his companions had lifted him up the apparition was gone.

"And since that time the same awful presence has made its appearance in different parts of the castle, but always within the confines of the old keep.

"The result has been that Tancred dares not visit that part of his castle alone and never in the night. The old hall is disused, and the chambers of the dungeon unoccupied by those who know the truth.

"Thus much Kotzling has told me, and you can follow up the subject as well as I. One thing is evident: The powers, be they what they may, that have frightened the grand duke from the crypt, are those which have so signally interposed in behalf of right and justice to-day. It is not for me to say what they may be, or what they may not be. There are in this strange world of ours, and running through the lives of many of us, powers and principles entirely beyond our comprehension.

"If you tell me that you cannot account for such things, I will tell you in return that you cannot account for the simplest form of life on earth.

"If you tell me these things are mysterious, I will ask you to solve for me the mystery of the lightning that rends our mountains, and the loud thunder that shakes the earth. If you tell me they are beyond belief, I will tell you that the wonderful phenomena of nature all about us would be beyond the belief of him who witnessed them for the first time. It is only the absolute necessity of believing that leads much of our faith.

"Our reason is powerless in the presence of Omnipotence. We can only bow our heads, and believe because we cannot successfully dispute. If there can be found a natural solution of the mystery, Heaven send that we may live to know it."

"Amen!" pronounced Lionel; and Kenneth and Jasper echoed the sentiment.

The speech of the old forester had produced a powerful effect, and the subject was dropped, each seeming to feel that it would be sacrilege to reopen it.

Before any subject for further conversation had been brought forward, refreshments were served in the refectory, and when these had been partaken of, Father Clement again made his appearance.

Lionel had not seen him until now since their separation immediately after arriving.

Our hero's first impulse was to inquire after the Lady Mary, which he had not cared to do at a time when it might have seemed out of place.

The friar smiled benignly as he gave reply that the maiden was safe and well.

"And," he added, with a peculiar twinkle of the eye, "she seems much happier since being assured that you are once more safe beneath our roof. Poor child! she was sadly cast down and grieved when told of your misfortune. Very foolishly one of the sisters, not knowing what was in the lady's heart, broke to her the intelligence."

Lionel caught the old man by the arm. His



[THE LAW OF THE TIBANT.]

eyes were bright with a new light, and his cheeks were aglow.

The temptation was too strong to be resisted. And, furthermore, he could not divest himself of the feeling that the friar had, from the first, behaved as though he wished to throw him and Mary together.

In fact he had done so. And now he had introduced the subject in a manner significant of ulterior purposes.

"Father Clement, I do not think you would trifle with me. You must know enough of the human heart, in its youthful freshness and warmth of impulse, to know that I could not have seen that beautiful being, and listened to her sweet voice, and bathed in the sunlight of her bright smiles, without feeling emotions deeper and stronger and more pervading than those of mere passing friendship.

"You tell me she was made happy in knowing of my welfare. Can you give me hope that I may win her priceless love?—and, if that be won, that I may win her hand? Pardon me if I am impetuous, or if I seem to speak hastily, but I must know if the love I find bursting into flame in my own heart be hopeless. If it be, then I shall know how to guide my steps in the future."

"My dear boy," said the monk, with paternal familiarity and fondness, "you need not run away from the lady. If you love her I think you may safely tell her so; and if she loves you in return, and will consent to be your wife, I know not why the union should not be consummated."

"Oh! good father?"

"In short, my son," Clement added, more seriously, and in a tone of grave solemnity, "I know not why I should not confess the whole truth in the outset. The lady has been already informed, and she bore up under the blow grandly. I will tell you on condition that you do not push me with questions beyond the information I am free to give of my own accord."

"Is it more mystery, good father?"

"That must be as you estimate it. I heard the last of Rupert's speech, a short time since, and he spoke wisely. There is enough of mystery in every life, and in all life, to engage one's whole attention if he chose to give his thoughts solely to the things which he could not comprehend. There may be, in what I shall tell you, something of mystery, and if you fear to bear the burden, I will not impose it upon you."

"Pardon me, good father! I did not mean to complain—far from it. Tell me what you have to tell. It is of Mary you would speak—Mary of Ravenswald?"

"So she has been called, but Ravenswald is not yet her title, for we know that Tancred is not her father."

"And you know her true parentage?" urged Lionel.

The monk returned him a look of stern reproof.

"My son, do not pain me unnecessarily. If I have been made the custodian of important secrets, be sure I shall keep them until I may surrender the charge with honour, and in good faith. Canst thou not be content with that which I can cheerfully confide to thee?"

An expression of shame was upon the youth's handsome face. He took the old man's hand, and, in earnest, humble tones implored:

"Good father, I am beside myself with doubt and impatience. My feelings have been strangely wrought upon, and my heart has been sadly bruised. Once more I cry thee mercy! Pardon me this offence, and I will not offend again."

"Heaven give thee rest, my son, and may the blessed angels bring thee peace and comfort! I will tell thee that which I had in mind when I first spoke. I said that thou mightst seek the hand of the Lady Mary if it was thy wish. Now, tell me, frankly and truthfully, is thy heart thus inclined?"

"Oh, good father, canst thou seriously ask me the question? Is my heart thus inclined? Ah, I know now what it is to love—what it is to have the heart bound up in another—to feel that life can be never more blessed save in the companionship of the one chosen being whose fate must henceforth be united with my own. It seems to me—and I speak from sincere conviction—that my life would be from this time aimless if the hope of winning the love and the faith of that pure heart were denied me."

"I know that my knowledge of her has been the growth of but a few short hours, but we both know how often the destiny of a life is decided by the event of an instant. My heart has gone forth in yearning, prayerful love to the fair lady, and I should feel a chill like the touch of the death-spell if I thought I might never take her to my bosom, and hear the music of confession from the whispering of her own dear lips!"

"My son," said Clement, with visible emotion, "I can believe you. Though my vows hold me aloof from such love, and though my weight of years may have laid at rest the ardour of youth, yet I can sympathise with you; and, moreover, I can fully appreciate the instinct which has led you to love that blessed girl."

"Your instincts do not mislead you. I know that she is all that is true and pure and good. Her heart is tender as the heart of an infant, and yet as firm and strong as the heart of a saint. She is gentle and mild, yet brave and loyal."

"He who wins her love will have won a treasure above all price; and the winning of her hand may be deemed a crown of glory for any man. And now I will tell you of the secret—and I tell it because I would have you know why I have suffered you to be brought under the influence of her bright smiles."

(To be Continued.)



[RECOGNISED.]

BOUND TO THE TRAWL.

By the Author of "Clytie Crandbourne," "The Golden Bowl," "Poor Loo," etc.

CHAPTER XV.

"I AM HIS FATHER."

Henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
Enough, enough, and die. SHAKESPEARE.

As Colonel Chartres and Percy drew near the end of their search their minds were too full for them to utter any but the most necessary observations.

To talk about any subject but the one uppermost in the thoughts of each seemed but an idle and useless effort, while something, a dread of they knew not what, kept them silent on that one topic just as one holds their breath and walks on tip-toe past the room where our loved ones lie dead or dying.

For strange as it may seem, having had no hint of Basil's reputed crime or possible fate, neither of his kinsmen who came to meet and claim him really in their hearts expected to meet him face to face.

"He may be away in the smack," thought his father.

"Most likely he has fallen overboard, or met with some mishap that has proved fatal," surmised his cousin, and therefore neither would have been surprised at sweet Katie Jessop's repetition of the name of "Basil Rossburn," had not her countenance expressed such a terrible mixture of horror and terror.

"Yes, Basil Rossburn," reiterated Colonel Chartres, with eager impatience and some alarm. Is he here? Answer me quickly, girl, I am his father.

But the girl's fright and dismay, instead of diminishing, increased.

A horror over which she had no control seized

her, with eyes dilated, with mouth half open, her face pale as marble, and blue veins marking her temples, she started back, and giving them no answer, she half staggered towards her aunt, saying:

"Basil's father wants him."

So startling was the announcement that even Miss Topsam's equanimity was upset; casting one sternly reproachful glance at her persistent suitor as though he, in some way or other, were the cause of this anxiety, she drew her gaunt figure up to its full height, and strode to the door where the two men stood.

"Come in," she said, shortly, taking stock of them, and deciding rapidly in her mind that she liked the elder one best.

"This is Captain Growler's house, isn't it?" asked Percy Rossburn, who was the calmer of the two; "the young lady who opened the door didn't seem to understand us."

"She ain't a lady, but an honest man's daughter, and this ain't the place to talk of such matters; you asked for Basil Rossburn, didn't you?"

"Yes, we—"

"Then come in," sharply.

And as they obeyed her and came into the presence of Mr. Robert Crabtree, she waved her hand towards her long suffering lover, and as an introduction, said:

"That's the man that found him guilty when the poor lad's been murdered!"

"Murdered!"

And Colonel Chartres reeled, and but that his nephew caught him in his arms, would have fallen.

As it was, they laid him gently on the hearth-rug—the room could not boast of couch or carpet, and Katie got water and vinegar, while Miss Topsam loosened his coat, ordering Percy to rub the old gentleman's hands.

Feeling that this was no time for wooing, and that his present position was, to say the least of it, uncomfortable, Mr. Crabtree, thinking himself unnoticed in the attention paid to the unconscious stranger, was moving gently

and softly towards the door, when Miss Meg Topsam's eye detected and as it were transfixed him.

"Sneaking away ashamed of your work?" she asked, with a sneer, at which the dignity and independence of the British juror asserted itself, and, assuming an air of wounded virtue, he retorted:

"No, Miss Topsam, I only did my duty and acted according to law; 'twas the verdict of twelve men, not of one I will ask you to remember, Miss Meg."

"The verdict of twelve idiots!" with withering contempt; "but don't stand there looking like a fish in a fit, come and pull the gentleman's boots off and rub his feet; you ought to be glad to undo some of your precious handiwork."

"I don't see how it's my work; but I'll be glad to do anything to please you, Meg," and he went and knelt down at Colonel Chartres' feet, pulled off his boots, and rendered what little assistance he could in reviving him.

The stricken soldier was breathing, had opened his eyes, and was beginning to ask where he was and what had happened, when the door unceremoniously opened, and in walked Captain Growler.

"Holloa! what's up now," he asked, "nobody washed ashore, is it? Why," as he approached and looked at the half-conscious parent who looked so feebly at him; "it's young Rossburn's father or grandfather; and who are you, sir?"

This to the young barrister.

"My name is Rossburn," replied Percy, as he rose to his feet.

"And my name's Growler—Chris Growler—Cap'n Growler as some calls me. I'm skipper of this craft, and what may you do here?"

"I think I should like to talk with you alone for a few minutes, Mr. Growler," replied the young man, in his calm deliberate voice, as though he were just soothing and helping on a witness before badgering him; and he glanced around looking for a parlour or second living

room, but, besides a rude tiny kitchen in which the apprentices sometimes sat, there was none.

"All right, come along to the 'Compasses,'" it's just over the sand there, and I'll hear what you've got to say."

Percy glanced at his uncle's face, in which the warm flush of life was slowly returning, then at Miss Topsam, who nodded her head, saying in answer to his unspoken question:

"Yes, we'll take care of him," and without even a glance at pretty Katie, he took up his hat and followed her uncle.

When he returned an hour later with his rough but kind-hearted companion, he found Colonel Chartres seated in the captain's arm-chair with Miss Topsam on one side of the elderly, grief-oppressed man, a softer expression than usual upon her face, and with the suspicion of tears about her eyes, and sweet Katie Jessop, kneeling and half leaning against the arm of the chair, on the other.

"And there never could be a better boy than Basil was," Percy just heard her say, "and I don't believe he is dead! I dreamed of him last night; don't despond; if he ever is found you will be proud of him, and he is so like you that the likeness frightened me."

Sweet soothing flattery, helping the stricken father to survive what otherwise must have been his death blow.

CHAPTER XVI.

COLONEL CHARTRES FINDS A LITTLE COMFORT.

If thou dost ill the joy fades, not the pain;
If well the pain doth fade, the joy remains.
George Herbert.

PERCY ROSSBURN returned to town next day, urgent telegrams demanding his immediate presence, but Colonel Chartres remained behind, a singular fascination chaining him to the spot where his son had lived, and that must certainly, he believed, hold the secret thread that could unravel the mystery that surrounded his fate.

Katie Jessop, too, though unconsciously both to herself and to him, was another and powerful reason for his continued presence.

There was something so unusual and sympathetic in the girl's nature; she entertained such a warm and appreciative friendship for his son, that she seemed never tired of talking of the boy's truth, or generosity, or talent, and kindness of heart.

And the old man who had been in so many sharp struggles, where life and honour were at stake; who had known so much of sorrow, and yet had tasted to the full for a brief time the sweets of happiness, felt himself drawn irresistibly to this maiden, and more than once entertained the romantic idea of adopting her in place of the child he had lost.

Not that he gave utterance to this desire even to Miss Topsam, but he assured that severe spinster that he should ever be grateful to her for the kind feeling with which she regarded his boy, and that it would give him most sincere pleasure to be of use with purse or influence, such as he possessed, to her or any member of her family.

A speech that some people might have said, cost him nothing, neither did it, but his friendship did not take the form of words only, for a handsome (Paisley) shawl, Miss Topsam called it, came down from London in some luggage for the colonel, and was presented to that lady, and it was not till many months after, when she wore it to church and the curate's wife asked where she got it from, that she discovered it to be Indian, and worth from one to two hundred guineas.

It is sad to relate that from this time forward, the shawl, instead of being a pleasure, was a terrible burden to her, and she seriously meditated upon either asking the colonel to take it back and give her something less costly, or of sending it to the bank, as she would have done so much plate for security.

There were reasons against either plan, however; the first would give the donor pain, the second would probably ensure the ruin of the

costly article in question since she had heard that all valuables were placed in the cellars of a bank.

"Nasty damp places," as she observed, with disgust, so the shawl was folded up in paper, linen and lavender, never worn, and only occasionally looked at, being reserved for an important event which might one day arrive, when Miss Topsam should change her name and place of residence.

But to return to our colonel.

He had given the shawl to Miss Topsam, some pieces of tussore, muslin and Indian fabric, none of them seeming costly to Katie, and for himself he had taken lodgings in an old-fashioned house where the rooms were large and handsome, and the furniture old and shabby, though it had once like himself known younger and brighter days, and here, in view of the wide long stretch of flat sand and the expanse of sea, bounded only by the horizon, Colonel Chartres took up his abode.

No one knew who he was or whence he came, save Captain Growler's family and Mr. Robert Crabtree, and for the silence of the latter individual, Miss Meg Topsam, after having delivered her orders to her swain, pledged herself.

So the man who had fought and bled under an Indian sun settled down here on this cold easterly coast, waiting patiently—his whole life had been one of patience—for some sign, some gleam of hope, or some confirmation of despair concerning his missing son.

None came.

He heard men talking on the quay, the pier, the jetty, fragments of conversation wafted from groups of fishermen, and despite the verdict from the twelve intelligent jurymen, the opinion was general that Rossburn had been the intended victim, not the perpetrator of the crime.

A melancholy consolation, though soothing in its way, for much as he felt he loved him, the boy was but an idea, a sentiment in the colonel's life.

He had never seen him; it was but within the last few days or weeks at farthest, that confirmation of his wife having given birth to a living child had been afforded, therefore, painful as was the shock he had received, it was not so bad as though the lad had been his companion and he had seen and known him.

For even his offspring's disposition and appearance were like an unknown land to the father, and he was never tired of hearing Katie Jessop talk of Basil, while she on her part seemed to linger with sad affection upon the subject, as though talking of him brought the boy back or near to them.

"You were very fond of my son?" the veteran asked, one day.

"Yes, very," replied the girl.

She might have added: "as a brother," but she did not.

Katie had not learnt to make that distinction yet, though the time was but too surely approaching, when love would come and take possession of her poor little heart, and teach her to feel the intense happiness and harrowing misery which in a greater or lesser degree is the heritage of all her earthly sisterhood.

Unconscious of approaching danger, with just one little pang now and again, as she thinks of a stranger who to her mind is the most perfect specimen of manly beauty, the sensation is still too vague to seem to have in it any elements of danger, and had she never seen him again, it would in the course of time have been idealised and he would have ranked among her heroes, of whom all derived from books, she had many.

But the weird sisters had marked Katie Jessop out for great suffering, to be purified and made strong thereby perhaps, but the cup held to her lips must be quaffed to the very dregs, and there can be no escape.

The girl's education was a subject which interested her new friend, and he was both pleased and surprised to discover how far above the average of her age and station she was in culture and learning.

"Mr. Herbert, the curate, who gives me a lesson once a week, and directs me what I am to read or prepare by the next time he comes, gave me all these books," she said, one day, opening an old box which her aunt had covered with a cushion and a piece of chintz to look like an ottoman. "He told me they once belonged to a nephew of his who died, and he thought they were better than new ones for me, because I should not be afraid to use them. Wasn't it kind of him?"

"Very."

"And I gave Basil one or two," she went on, "the one," with a shudder, "that was found on the boat all stained was a present from me; he thought more of it than anything else he had. He wouldn't have left it behind if he could have helped it, would he?"

"Certainly not. And could he read it—well, I mean. It was a book of poetry, wasn't it?"

"Oh, yes; it was Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*; and you should have heard him read, it was beautiful. I taught him," with a blush, "but he soon got ahead of me."

"Indeed; how did you teach him?"

"Well, we hadn't much time, you know," said the girl, confidentially, "and sometimes the trawler was out for weeks together, but when uncle and Basil were home, that was after George Crabtree went away, uncle often went out, and then I gave Basil lessons in reading aloud, and Aunt Meg listened to us. Mr. Herbert gives me lessons in elocution, and teaches me about inflections, and the rise and fall of the voice, and that kind of thing, and I used to remember it to teach Basil. Auntie said it was good practice."

"Your aunt was fond of my boy also; she seems a very estimable woman."

"She is, indeed; she pretends to be rough and abrupt, but no one can be more kind or gentle or loving than Auntie Meg. I shall be very sorry when she gets married and leaves us."

"Married?" repeated the soldier, in surprise, his ideas of matrimony being connected with young and pretty women; "surely there is no danger of that!"

"Ah! there you are mistaken. I heard her say only yesterday that constant dropping will wear away a stone, and then I knew that Mr. Crabtree's suit was not hopeless, but it will be very dreadful for uncle and me when she goes. I sometimes think it is on our account that she continues to say 'no.'"

"Well, you must come and take care of me, and be my little daughter, if your aunt gets married, will you?"

"I am going to be a teacher in a school," gravely. "It's what I'm working for. I want to earn my living, for I can't always be a burden on my uncle, and I wish to do good to others, and as a teacher I could, you know"—a bright flash coming over her fair face.

"Yes," returned her companion, gravely, "but you would also be doing good by taking care of me."

"But I couldn't teach you anything, for you know more than I ever shall, and you are not very old, so that you can take care of yourself."

"No, but I could take care of you, and if you were my adopted daughter, you would not have to work, and you could dress and have the companionship of refined and educated women. I have one little niece with whom I know you would soon be friends."

Katie shook her head.

"I should like to know your niece," she replied; "but it's my business in life to work, not to play and to dress like a fine lady, when I'm not born one: they would only look down upon me and despise me, and I am as proud as they are, perhaps more so. No, if ever I do leave home, sir, perhaps you will help me to get a situation to teach in a school."

"I will, without doubt, Katie; you must always look upon me as a friend, or a father, and write to me if you are in any difficulty or trouble; I am thinking of returning to town in a few days. I can learn nothing here about my boy, and the monotony of the place wears me; be-

sides, I want to consult my nephew, and he is too busy to come down to me, so I must go to him."

"What is your nephew?" asked the girl, curiously. "What does he do to be so busy?" Colonel Chartres explained some of the duties and position of a barrister.

"And is it the hard work that has made his hair grey?" was the next question.

"Oh, no; most of his family become prematurely grey."

"His family; has he a mother, or sister, or—?" she paused.

But the old gentleman took up her question innocently enough, as he said:

"No, he has no near female relations, and he is not married—not yet, at least."

"Not yet," thought the girl, with something like a sigh; "perhaps he is going to be."

She did not give utterance to the suspicion, however, for what concern was it of hers?

He was a gentleman, and might one day rank with the proudest in the land, while she was a poor, ignorant little girl, belonging to hard working people, one whose life was to be one of toil—mental or physical, and who had been taught by her clear-headed, straightforward aunt that while it was the duty of every human being to do the best they could for themselves, so that they did it honestly and conscientiously, it was, on the other hand, little less than a crime to ape a position to which one was not entitled by birth or education, or to entertain vain, unreasonable desires that could never be realised.

And as she thus mused sadly, and in silence, walking over the soft sands with her time and sorrow-beaten companion, she lifted up her eyes and saw afar off a man coming towards her.

At first he only slightly excited her curiosity, then, as he came nearer, her cheek flushed, her blue eyes became darker, while a new light glowed in them, and she said, with suppressed excitement, in a low tone:

"Please, sir, the gentleman—your nephew is coming; he is just there; don't you see him?"

"Of course; how sharp your eyes are, Katie," and Colonel Chartres walked briskly forward to meet Percy Rosburn, while Katie, feeling strangely uncomfortable and out of place, half turned and walked down towards the sea.

But she was not thus to escape, for as she turned aside to avoid her fate, he followed and overtook her.

CHAPTER XVII.

"FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD."

Know'st thou not when love invades the soul
That all her faculties receive his chains?
That reason gives her sceptre to his hand,
Or only struggles to be more enslaved.

DR. S. JOHNSON.

"MISS KATIE. What makes the girl run away from me?"

Greeting and question both came from Percy Rosburn, though the latter was mental, and Katie, restraining a great inclination to take to her heels and run, turned, and with a glowing face and timid eyes encountered the keen, scrutinising gaze of the young barrister.

"How do you do," she managed to articulate, while he took her hand, looked at her, and for the first time discovered that she was exceedingly pretty.

Rather young, but that was a fault that she would grow out of; unformed too, for English girls at seventeen, despite the supposed charms of that age, as a rule lack the grace and roundness of movement and outline which a few years later come to them as women.

In Katie's case there was all the promise of physical and mental perfection, just as the rose bud carries in its folds what shall one day be the queen of the garden, and Percy Rosburn, gifted with some imagination, though he devoted himself to the study of the law, saw, or thought he saw, in her possibilities which, to a speculative mind, always offer a greater attraction than certainties.

Meanwhile they are standing on the sand, which is damp, the colour is deepening on the

girl's face, making her dark blue eyes luminous as stars under their black lashes, and it is a sensation of relief to her when Colonel Chartres approaches and joins in the conversation.

"Yes, I go to town in a few days," he is saying, "but I shall come back again, often perhaps; and meanwhile Percy has, after thinking the matter over, and talking with men skilful in hunting out the perpetrators of crime, come to the same conclusion as your aunt, that the fellow George Crabtree murdered the poor boy who was found dead, and perhaps—with a gasp—killed my son."

"Yes," shuddered Katie; and she looked about apprehensively as though dreading George Crabtree might be near, for in some strange way she never felt safe from his presence.

"He has done something to frighten you," said Percy, sternly, his dark eyes fixed upon her as though he dared her to deny it.

"Yes," she admitted, reluctantly, while her cheeks lost their deep colour, and became white. "He frightened me very much one day, but Basil came in time, that was, I fear, why George hated him. But uncle knows about it; after this dreadful murder happened I told auntie and she made me repeat it to him. I should have told it at the inquest if Basil had been there and in danger."

She had become unnerved and trembling. Ever since Basil's disappearance and poor little Charlie's death she had never felt safe from George Crabtree.

In the middle of the night she would wake up shrieking, believing he was at her bedside about to murder her, and when the wind was high and rustled, or shrieked and howled round their little house, she felt that the murderer was abroad, peering in through the shutters or lying in wait for some opportunity of adding her to the list of his victims.

Perceiving how the subject agitated her, Percy dropped it, observing that as he must return to town that same night, he would call and have a few minutes conversation with Miss Topsam. "So I'll go on before you," he headed, starting off at a brisk pace while his uncle and Katie more leisurely followed.

"You will write to me sometimes, Katie, won't you," said her companion; "remember I shall always be your friend and will help you as though you were my own daughter."

"Yes, sir, thank you," was the reply. Then suddenly lifting her fair face she asked: "Do you think I shall have to learn a great deal more before I am fit to teach a school?"

"No, but you ought to have a little more training, I think. It is not only necessary to know what to teach, but how to teach, and of the latter you have had no experience."

"No," sadly.

"Shall I get you some post under a good schoolmistress, where you can both teach and learn?" he asked.

"Oh, can you?" eagerly.

"Of course; it is the most ordinary thing possible. I will make inquiries and write to you in a few days."

"Thank you very much, but I am sorry you are going."

"Yes, I shall miss you too, but I shall see you again. There is Percy talking with your aunt. I don't know what I should do without him."

And he looked with affection, first at his nephew, then at the girl by his side, and an odd idea entered his mind, but he drove it away decisively.

Colonel Chartres was a romantic man in his way, and could do many unusual and quixotic things himself, but that notion was too absurd even for him to entertain.

Basil might have married Katie because they were brought up together, and she was a girl greatly superior to her class; but Percy, the rising barrister, the man to whom ambition and power and wealth were as the breath of his life, without which he could not exist; no, the poor little thing had better bury herself under those rolling breakers than hope to mate with him.

For the dove and the eagle had just as much in common as these two.

With a sigh the old man gave up the thought. Had he been younger he might possibly have contemplated marrying her himself, for he had a strange horror of this girl being thrown alone on the world, knowing as she did so little of its temptations, and guilt and misery, and, though he quite believed her own straightforwardness of purpose and purity of heart would keep her innocent and unspotted where others might be tainted, still, the idea of one so sensitive being exposed to doubt or temptation was, to the tender-hearted old man, intolerable.

Meg Topsam had supplied all the information in her power, had given a full and particular description of George both as to his person and his disposition, and had added to it a photograph upon glass which he had been vain enough to have taken, and that represented a villain of a true Old Bailey pattern; then adieus were said; the colonel said he should write soon, and the two men went away, leaving a strange void behind.

From Captain Growler's, after what he had learnt from Miss Topsam, Percy Rosburn led the way to Jem Brock's abode.

He knew the man was away trawling, but he did not expect Diana would be out, and consequently, after knocking with the head of his stick once or twice, he lifted the latch of the door, and obeyed the voice of an old woman who bade him "come in, can't yer."

When Granny Brock saw that her visitors were gentlemen she would have risen to her feet to curtsy had not her age and infirmity prevented her; as it was, she bade them come in, shut the door, and he seated on two wooden chairs, which, with her bony hand, she pointed to.

Percy, who meant to conduct this matter, gave his uncle one of the seats, then took the other up to the side of the old dame who, he rightly judged, was decidedly deaf.

"You had a young man called George Crabtree living here," he hallooed in her ears.

"Yes; I'm not so deaf; you needn't shout, thank you, sir. Yes, George Crabtree, a bad lot he was, as I told our Di; she'd haved rued the day she married him, and she gave him up. A good girl is poor Di. I telled her how I heerd him climb up to his room as St. Nicholas's clock was striking one in the morning. She said 'twas a mistake and I'd been dreaming, but 'twas no mistake, for she begged me not to mention it to my son Jem, and I didn't."

"Jem is Di's father, isn't he?" asked the barrister.

"Ay, in course he is."

"And what night was this, can you remember?"

"Yes, 'twas the night afore they was to sail in the morning, and we'd got a commotion, though I couldn't make head or tail on't, and they wouldn't tell me, but Jem's only gone to sea this once since then."

"The very night," he said, to his uncle. Then to the old woman he went on: "Can't you fix the very day?"

"No, I can't, but Di can," as that young woman appeared in the doorway.

At sight of the strangers Diana's once beautiful but now deeply pitted face became troubled. Then she walked into the middle of the room, and turning to them, asked:

"What do you want? My granny's too old to know what she is saying."

"There you are mistaken," said Percy Rosburn, rising to his feet, and looking at her keenly, thinking for a moment that she was an accomplice, "her memory is very clear about what we have been talking."

"And what is that?" anxiously.

"About George Crabtree climbing up the side of the house, and over the roof to his own room, the night that boy was murdered on board the smack; you found the scratches from the nails of his boots on the roof and against the window-sill, didn't you?"

But Diana sank on a chair, covered her face with her hands, and said, passionately:

"Don't ask me; I won't tell you; I've no—"

thing to say about it; go away; what is George Crabtree to you or to me? I've done with him."

"You won't tell?" said Percy, sternly. "Do you know what your saying? You won't tell makes one believe—"

"No, and don't care. Believe what you like. Go away; we've nothing to do with George Crabtree, he's gone, and we don't want to hear about him."

"And you have no regard for being locked up or arrested as his accomplice?" demanded the young man, sternly.

"Accomplice! What is that?" asked Diana. But the old woman, who had not distinctly heard the words, and only judged from the expression of the stranger's face, pleaded, "Don't be hard on Di, she gave him up directly she knew it, didn't you, dearie?"

"Hold your tongue, granny; I didn't know anything, and I don't know anything, and he's gone away, and you're not constables in plain clothes, are you, sirs?"

"No; we are the relatives of the boy who is missing, about whose fate we believe George Crabtree, and perhaps you," with a significant glance, "could tell us something if you choose."

"The boy that the verdict was against?" she said, quietly, but in a tone which stung her listeners.

"Yes, and it will not be the first time that a coroner's verdict will be set aside. Can I go up and look at the room this man occupied?"

"No," positively.

"Where is your father?"

"At sea."

"Do you expect him back to-night?"

"He may not be back for several days."

"And you refuse to let me examine the roof, or that fellow's room?"

"I do."

"Then we will leave you," and walking over to the old woman, he put five shillings in her hand, telling her to buy tobacco with it, and followed by his uncle, who had maintained complete silence, they left the house.

"Don't you think you were rather sharp with that girl?" asked the elder man; but his companion replied sternly:

"Hard, certainly not; she knows more than she will tell us. I must have the house searched to-day, not that I expect to find much evidence in it, but it may be useful afterwards, particularly after what the old woman has told us. One o'clock would be the very time at which the murderer would return, and those people must have had a reason they don't give for sending him away, when, too, the young woman was to have married him; it destroys my theory of her being an accomplice; but that, I don't think, for any length of time would hold good."

"Only don't worry or bother the woman unnecessarily."

"You're too tender-hearted for a soldier or a lawyer, uncle," satirically. "Will you go and order dinner, while I call on Truelove. I've been down here on circuit, and know some people."

Truelove, though the Colonel did not know it, was a stipendiary magistrate. Percy had been on intimate terms with him, and consequently could state frankly the whole circumstances of the case, and without hesitation say what he wanted.

"I see; you want a search warrant, to verify the old woman's story, and ascertain if there is any proof of the suspicions which you say are shared by the people who knew this man. Very well, you'd better talk to our Chief Constable, he will know what to do."

So the story had to be gone over again in all its details, and then Mr. Sweetman, who pretended to be very cunning, suggested that they should leave the matter in his hands, and was beginning to treat it as a matter settled, when Percy observed:

"My uncle is ready to give three hundred pounds for the discovery of his son, previously known as Basil Rossburn, if living, or on the identification of his body if dead, and two hundred more for the conviction of the murderer of the boy found dead on the fishing smack."

"Would you mind writing that down and signing that, sir?" asked Mr. Sweetman; "it will be an inducement for some of our men."

Percy complied, and declining Mr. Truelove's invitation to dinner, returned to his uncle at the hotel, and a few hours later they were together on their way to London.

The search warrant was not issued at the moment, but a very strict watch was kept upon Jem Brock's house, and himself and daughter, also George Crabtree was carefully sought after, for five hundred pounds reward was a tempting bait; while the interest which had begun to flag and die out in the affair was suddenly revived by the big posters that not only attracted attention at Great Barmouth, but found their way outside most of the police-stations in England.

"Five hundred pounds reward, I'd like to get that," grinned a ragged, dirty, half-starved, thick set young man of from eighteen to twenty; and he stuck his hands in his pockets and lounged as though he were too idle even to stand upright.

Rogue, vagabond, possible thief were written upon him.

He had tried many things since he stole away in the dead of the night from Great Barmouth, or had pretended to do so, but hard work had never been in accord with his inclinations, and now the alternative stared him in the face, he must steal—not steal when a good opportunity offered itself only, but steal for bread, for life, or he must enlist as a soldier.

He was trying to make up his mind, doing that lazily, when the tempting offer of five hundred pounds stared him in the face, and he stopped to read it.

But when he has read the last word, George Crabtree, for it is he, moves away from the spot more quickly than he reached it.

Five hundred pounds reward for his conviction; that is how he read it.

With such a bribe where could he be safe? Who would not sell him?

Diana Brock could not withstand such a temptation he was sure, and she must know something, for had she not refused to consider herself bound to marry him.

Where could he be safe, where could he hide himself?

There was no place but London—he had heard that anybody could be lost in London, and thus begging and stealing when he had the chance to do either, he set off on foot for the great metropolis.

(To be Continued.)

MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G.

PROBABLY in our later days, when hot verbal brickbats flow thick and fast, when an ex-Premier denounces the present one, as Mr. Gladstone undoubtedly has denounced the Earl of Beaconsfield as the breaker of almost all the commandments; turning, however, to the brilliant rejoinder made by the fine old Chief to the "sophisticated rhetorician," and excusing these somewhat trivial quarrels, we can attempt some portraiture of the actors themselves.

Some months ago we endeavoured to draw in black and white a portraiture of the Earl of Beaconsfield. It was, no doubt, limited for its subject; and, in fact, instead of a page, a biography of such a man might well claim many numbers. Since then, moreover, the events of recent life have been still more startling; or, as the maligners of greatness love to say, still more melo-dramatic. The Earl of Beaconsfield has been to Berlin with the Marquis of Salisbury as his friend and companion, both as plenipotentiaries.

It is of the latter nobleman that we would now speak, not, of course, forgetting the former. Who would forget Hamlet while Hamlet was absent? But it is of the Marquis, who, wise, gifted, and patriotic withal, played

somewhat the Horatio to the Hamlet, that we are now about to set down a few cardinal facts.

The Right Hon. Robert Arthur Gascoyne Cecil, eldest surviving son of the second Marquis of Salisbury, was born at Hatfield, Hertfordshire, in 1830. The founder of this branch of nobility was the, we were about to say, notorious, but we will content ourselves with saying celebrated personage, Sir William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, whose name in the era of Elizabeth ranks like that of Bismarck or of Beaconsfield in our own. No reader of Hume, the most industrious collector of Tudor facts, nor of Froude, the most romancing of all our writers, will equal in their picture that drawn in short but simple sentences of the Great Lord Burleigh. He was a great statesman. To him we owe it that we defeated the plans of the Spanish League allied against Freedom.

The Spanish Armada was subjugated by Lord Howard of Effingham, acting strictly under his wise orders. Nevertheless, one or two unpleasant facts remain. He was, as the contemporary chronicler wisely adds, most needlessly cruel. Can there be a need for cruelty? We think not—not even to one of our poor, penciling creatures. But, with a fierce fury and a mean malignity, the Lord Cecil of that date hunted down, even to her dark hour at Fotheringay, poor, dear, but ever sweet and beautiful lady, Queen Mary Stuart, who, against all conspirators, died Queen of Scots!

Such, in fine, was the origin of the Cecils. We may trace the first personage of this family—ennobled in no way that commands nobility. The family of the Eastern Cæsars at Constantinople would, indeed, have waited long and well (see Finlay *passim*) before they had heralded a man who had murdered a Queen Regnant. In a popular and pleasant publication we cannot dwell upon this painful subject, but send inquirers to the masterly tract by Gilbert Stuart, LL.D., of the University of Edinburgh, on this matter. For this masterly affair, in which the gifted, yet unfortunate Dr. Stuart vindicated the fair fame of maligned grace and injured beauty against the Cecils and Throgmortons and other hired assassins of that period, the learned University of Leyden thought fit to confer a high degree on Dr. Stuart.

But what, will the reader say, of the Marquis? Well, we have been giving his antecedents. Nor are the antecedents irrelevant as some might suppose. Go over a good picture-gallery, as that of the Earl of Stair at Oxford, near Edinburgh, and you will speedily find that the old faces appear and re-appear, though in what precise sequence it might puzzle even the fancy of the impious Darwin and his positive school of sham science to say.

The present Marquis became, while a mere boy, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, a foundation on which some sneers have been expended. We have seen Oxford; have dined in All Souls; have conversed with one or two of its men; and, indeed, to keep alive the old flavour of the country, there is absolutely nothing like those kindly, genial old institutions.

Fellowships over, however, Lord Robert Cecil, *vide Debreit*, turned himself to political life. He became member for Stanford in 1853 in Lincolnshire. Not contented, however, with being a member and (as Sir R. Walpole would have said of Pitt) a young man, he aspired to write in the newspapers and magazines. The "Saturday," "Quarterly," and the "Standard" newspaper became the exponents of his views, and the vehicles of his policy.

Up to this time and throughout his policy had been that of a High Anglican and strict Conservative, and he has never faltered in either respect.

In 1856 his clever articles in the "Quarterly Review" paved the way, which he little meant to do, for Palmerston to return to office. He had, meanwhile, by the death of his brother, become Lord Cranbourne, a tinsel title which, let us hope, did him much good.

He then became Secretary for India, and in recent Tory administrations his eminent abilities have been too powerful, too fashionable let us

add, to be neglected. Toryism always neglects its faithful sons. However, from one port to another, the Marquis has commanded the cordial support of his own side and sometimes the respect of his supporters, even including the Right Hon. John Bright.

His more recent policy is well known—as the Foreign Secretary in succession to the timorous and vacillating Derby. But he has, able man as he undoubtedly is, been conspicuously overshadowed by the Greatest Figure of them all, by the historic representative of Bolingbroke, by that eminent man, not of ability alone, but, indeed, of genius who saved us from war, has opened paths for poor starving Englishmen in Asia, with new railways, and has proved himself, as ever he had done, the friend and the liberator of the People. Writing in a popular periodical we are proud to refer to the Earl of Beaconsfield, and also to his lieutenant in the good work—the MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.

G.

It is stated that among the victims of cholera at Morar lately, died the man who was so well known as the champion shot in India for three years in succession—Sergeant Bryon, 62nd Regiment.

THE INVISIBLE COMMODORE; OR, THE SECRETS OF THE MILL.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE slip of paper was quickly conveyed by the finders to the false major, who read it two or three times with a visage that grew ominously stern with each reading.

"Let an eye be kept on Masterman," he then said, sternly.

Calling a dozen of his most trusted men, he began sounding the beach.

Those three fatal words—"gold buried near"—had not escaped his attention.

"If that gold is found," he said to Brewer, "it will be a dear find to our friend Masterman."

As fate would have it, the wild winds and waves of the latter half of the night had exerted their full might upon the very beach where the tragedy had been accomplished.

The loose sand thrown upon the bags of gold and silver had been so nearly washed away as to at once invite digging at that spot, and a very few strokes of a spade uncovered a bag of the treasure. A few rapid strokes more attested the whole truth. The treasure was all there.

"Seize Masterman and bring him here, disarmed and bound," ordered the false major.

A very few moments sufficed for the execution of this order.

The guilty wretch had been hovering about, watching the digging, visibly a prey to the greatest agitation and anxiety, and he blanched to the hue of death when a dozen stout hands were suddenly laid upon him.

"What do you want of me?" he asked, hoarsely, his guilty conscience telling him that some terrible discovery had been made, although the nature of this discovery had thus far been kept from him.

"The cap'n'll tell you."

This was all the answer that was given him.

He was soon before the false major, of whom he demanded the meaning of the violence with which he was treated.

"It means," replied the impostor, in an awful voice of wrath and menace, "that this paper has been found in the dead hand of one of our men—of Woodson!"

The paper was placed under the gaze of the prisoner.

It is simply impossible to describe the guilty consternation that appeared on the face of Masterman as he comprehended the accusation.

"It is false!" he gasped.

"No, no!" thundered the false major. "It is perfectly true! I can see now how the horrible work was accomplished as well as if I had been present. You told the six men in your boat to kill the other six, so as to divide the money among the six victors and yourself! Then you arrayed these six against one another, with such effect that you became the sole survivor. The very wounds of the dead men prove that they were killed in this manner. You meant to keep all the money to yourself, and come here and remove it at your leisure."

The guilt of the detected villain was so manifest upon his own features and in his own attitude, that it was a mere act of desperation for him to continue to deny it.

A dozen voices cut short his protestations of innocence and his cries for mercy.

"Quick! to the nearest tree with him!" ordered the false major. "Let him die like a dog!"

And so ended the schemes of Masterman.

"False in one thing, false in all," said the pirate leader, as he stood looking at the whirling body. "This man has played me false in another direction! I know now that he assisted Governor Morrow and his daughter to escape on the island. Rally to the hunt for them, boys—rally on the instant! I will give a thousand pounds to the man who first sets his eyes again upon that girl and her father!"

Wild and eager was the response, and in a few moments more a general hunt for the fugitives was in progress!

The scene changes to one of the sweetest and wildest solitudes imaginable.

Far within the land, a few hundred miles to the westward of the Isthmus of Darien, there is a deep and circular bay, about two miles in diameter, protected from observation from the high seas by numerous outlying islands, among which passage is afforded only by narrow and winding channels.

At the head of this bay was a settlement, occupying a semi-circular beach, of whitest sand, and having in its rear a forest of large trees that stretched indefinitely into the interior, covering numerous hills of considerable elevation.

In the waters of the bay lay several vessels at anchor.

Two of them were evidently merchant vessels which had been stripped of everything worth removing, and abandoned.

Two others were staunch and new schooners of medium size, which were heavily manned and armed, and ready for desperate and deadly battle at the slightest notice.

Still another ship lying at anchor there was an old acquaintance: the "Alliance."

Upon the beach nearly a hundred children of all ages were playing.

The air was filled with their joyous exclamations and laughter.

They were evidently as care-free as the birds of beautiful plumage that sat in the tree-tops which lined the beach as with a fringe of emerald.

Upon the still waters of the harbour floated a score of canoes, the occupants of some of them fishing, but the majority of them floating quietly and silently, and there was a sort of expectation in the mien of their occupants which showed that an important arrival was expected.

The dwellings along the beach, at the head of the harbour, were numerous enough to constitute a veritable town.

They were spacious, too, well built and handsomely ornamented, as if designed for permanent occupancy.

Upon the verandas of nearly all of them were visible groups of persons, mostly women and children, but with here and there an old man

who had been permanently crippled, or a young man suffering from a recent injury.

There was something strange and startling in the aspect these women presented.

They represented nearly all colours and nations, from a black of the deepest ebony to a whiteness of the utmost purity, bronzed with the heat of the tropical sun. Their garments presented singular combinations of materials and colours.

Nearly all of them had young children in their arms or beside them.

A strange colony it was in point of location and appearance.

Its character could have hardly been mistaken.

It was a retreat or permanent settlement of a large brotherhood of pirates.

Suddenly a series of joyful cries and shouts resounded along the shore and the verandas of the dwellings, and all eyes were turned with redoubled attention towards the narrow channel by which the harbour was entered.

A formidable looking schooner, crowded with armed men, was seen threading the intricate passage.

She was under easy sail, and had reached the very narrowest part of the narrow channel—a spot where the shores on each hand were not fifty yards from each other.

Upon each of these was a strongly fortified tower, surrounded with deep moats, and having no visible doors or gates, and even very few apertures for the admission of light.

Between these towers had been stretched a vast iron chain, which was attached in the middle by other chains to anchors which had been sunk in mid-channel.

So formidable was this obstacle that a ship-of-war could not have possibly forced the blockade when this chain had been placed in position.

The battlements of the towers were now black with pirates, with joyful faces, who welcomed the new-comers with excited gestures and greetings, and were answered with corresponding demonstrations of pleasure and satisfaction.

The remainder of the channel having been duly traversed, the schooner entered the snug harbour we have described, and continued to stand on under easy sail in the direction of a solitary wharf immediately in front of the centre of the town.

Upon the stern of this schooner stood the false Major Clyde, in the midst of his officers and men, a picture of quiet contentment.

A few minutes more, and the schooner was at its accustomed anchorage, and nearly all the persons aboard of it hastily landed and scattered throughout the settlements, to the wives and families waiting to receive them.

The false major had succeeded in the purpose to which we left him.

The real major was again in his hands, and again confined in his old cage in the hold of the pirate schooner.

Governor Morrow and his daughter were also the prisoners of their enemy, and had been assigned to their old quarters, under the care and watch of Quaddo and his mother.

Not only were the false major and his men in the best of humour as was natural after the recovery of the vast treasure they had so nearly lost by the treachery of Masterman, but they were all rejoicing in the promise of a long season of idleness and dissipation.

"Here we are at last, Brewer," said the false major to his new executive, when the men had nearly all vanished. "I leave you in charge of the prisoners and of the schooner until further orders, and will hasten to report to the commodore. As to the treasure, we will leave it just where it is until due orders from headquarters."

Brewer inclined himself with an air which showed that he meant to respond to every trust reposed in him, and the false major entered a boat lying alongside, and was rowed to the land.

The beach was now almost deserted, but the false major received various greetings from the verandas he passed as he took his way thoughtfully towards a large and handsome villa occupy-

ing a commanding elevation a little in the rear of the settlement.

"I am going to quit," he muttered, with a stern look gathering on his face. "I've had enough of this sort of existence. Just how I shall depart, and under what circumstances, I do not yet see very clearly; but—the commodore will have to excuse me!"

He followed the well-worn path leading to the villa in question until he reached the front entrance, when he found himself face to face with a man who had advanced from the interior of the dwelling to meet him.

"Come in, Captain," invited the proprietor of the palatial residence, after he had shaken hands very warmly with the false major and uttered the usual conventional greetings. "I have been watching for you. I am, in fact, very anxious to see you. Come in."

And with this the "Commodore," as the false major had called him, led the way into one of the large rooms of the interior of the dwelling.

He was a man of medium size, fair-haired, with a delicate moustache, a whitish complexion, unusually small hands and feet, a cold, searching eye, and with a singularly stern expression of feature. He was clad in a sort of undress suited to the warm climate, but with oriental richness.

The pistols in his belt and the sword at his side were richly jewelled.

Upon the fingers of his hand sparkled diamonds of great size and splendour.

"I have received your despatches, by pigeon and otherwise, Captain Morrel," said the commodore, motioning his ally to a seat, "and presume I am very well posted about everything that has happened. Is Major Clyde still your prisoner?"

"He is, Captain Mallet," answered Morrel, thus betraying the identity of his companion, even as his own had been indicated. "He is safe in the hold of the schooner."

"And the money is really recovered from that thief of a Lasser?"

"Every penny of it."

The "Lasser" in the case was evidently the real name of the villain who had figured as Masterman.

"Then I do not see as we have any reason to complain, Morrel," said Mallet, thoughtfully. "It is true that the fleet of the enemy is still hovering off the coast, but they cannot get into the harbour, and if they could, we have guns enough in place to send them to the bottom. I am already aware that they mean to land on one of the outer shores, and endeavour to carry the position from the land side; but that is a measure that could only result in their total destruction."

"You think, then, the enemy is aware of our whereabouts?"

"Perfectly," answered Mallet. "It would have been foolish for us to expect to keep this knowledge from them much longer. We have taken into our service a certain number of spies, of course, in receiving so many new men into the brotherhood, but how was this drawback to be avoided? We have had to increase our forces with such materials as we could pick up, or the last man would have long since been gathered to his fathers."

Captain Morrel—otherwise the false major—took a few uneasy turns to and fro in the apartment while awaiting refreshments which had been ordered, and then he said, unhesitatingly:

"If I may talk frankly to you, Captain Mallet, I have something serious to say."

"Say on, of course."

"In a word, then," blurted out Morrel, "I wish to retire from the business!"

Mallet looked around keenly, noting that none of his numerous servants were within hearing, and then he responded, in a whisper:

"Retire, eh? So do I!"

Silence fell between the two men. They continued to look at each other.

"The truth is," resumed Mallet, "we need a change—a rest from the long strain that has been put upon us. It is not without care and

fatigue and constant vigilance that we have, during more than ten years, made ourselves the terror of the West Indies. Your masquerade at Barbadoes cannot have been a constant bliss, notwithstanding the mitigations afforded by the governor's daughter. By the way, how is she and her father?"

"In a rather gloomy mood, of course," answered Morrel. "Their streak of bad luck has really degenerated to a constant misfortune!"

"And you are still wooing the young lady, Morrel, eh?"

"Simply trying to, Captain Mallet."

"She is really a prize, then?" asked Mallet, banteringly. "I am curious to see her. We'll take a look in that direction in the course of the afternoon. And now to come back to the little confidences we were about to exchange. You have had enough of this life of toil and danger?"

"Perfectly, and would like to retire."

"In that case," said Mallet, looking at him significantly, "you ought to retire with the fruits of your labour. I, too, would like a change. As I have already indicated, I do not fear that the cruisers can assault our position here until they have obtained notable reinforcements from England; but that is a course they will certainly take, and in due time—within a year or two, more or less—they will make this retreat too hot to hold us. Suppose, therefore, that we vacate in time?"

"The sooner the better, Captain Mallet, I am frank enough to say," avowed Morrel, with a sigh.

"Then why not take a few of the most trusty of our men into our confidence, Morrel, and run away at once—this very night—with the schooner and the treasure?" asked Mallet, bluntly.

"You are serious?"

"Perfectly. If we keep the treasure in our own hands, it will set us up in the Old World as princes. On the other hand, if we divide it with all the men, they will soon virtually throw it into the sea. Let's slip off to-night and sail for Europe!"

"Done, Captain Mallet! But—may I continue to speak freely?"

A nod was sufficient answer.

"Then I would like to land Governor Morrow before our departure," proposed the false major. "He is simply in the way."

"All right. I see no objections."

"And I would also like to feed Major Clyde to the fishes first, as a matter of precaution."

"Well, why don't you suit yourself in the matter? And now for a good lunch, Morrel, while we enter into the details of all that has happened, and more especially of all that is to happen in the near future!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

The night had just fallen.

In his cage in the hold of the pirate schooner reclined Harry Clyde, listening intently to the sounds that were borne to his hearing on the still air around him.

He was in total darkness.

"It is night again," he mused. "The schooner is still at anchor at some harbour. I might say at some populous port, such a constant buzz has been kept up around us. The secret of this fact is, of course, that we are at the pirate retreat."

His ear had been so well educated to take the place of sight that he had not the least doubt of these conclusions.

"Perhaps it would have been as well if we had thrown ourselves into the sea at the island," he muttered, looking back to his temporary freedom. "We had at least time enough to kill ourselves after we detected the presence of the pirates, and found that we could not escape capture."

It will be seen that he was very near the lowest depths of despair.

Suddenly a light flashed upon him. The new executive stood before him.

"I have brought you a letter, Major Clyde," announced Brewer, "and will hold a light for you to read it."

"A letter?" exclaimed Harry, without making the least movement towards receiving the epistle. "What new mockery and torture is this? Who should write to me? I know it's not from Miss Morrow or her father, for all my prayers to be allowed to write them or to receive a line from them have been brutally denied. Who, therefore, can have written me?"

"That is for you to find out. I will add, however,—since you are so much afraid of the letter—that it was written by your sister Florence!"

"My sister—Florence?" repeated the prisoner slowly.

"Yes—as you can see for yourself by the handwriting!"

And with this Brewer presented the face of the letter, under a strong glare of light, to the gaze of the prisoner.

What a shock a single glance at the address gave him! What a groan of agony escaped him!

It was indeed the well-remembered handwriting of his sister!

"Heavens! my sister here?" he gasped.

"As you see, Major! And now to read for yourself what she says as soon as you can, for I am in a hurry to vanish!"

Harry had already seized the letter and torn it open.

It read as follows:

"BROTHER,—

"I am here—at the retreat of the pirates! Our poor father having died suddenly, as I wrote you in my last, mother and I determined to join you at once at Barbadoes. We took ship accordingly—and have fallen into the hands of one of Captain Mallet's ships that has been watching for prey to the eastward of that island."

"We have been here now three days—mother and myself. We are both as well as could be expected, but mother has not eaten a mouthful since our arrival."

"We are shut up in the house of Mallet, under strict watch. We learned only an hour since of your presence and whereabouts, and indeed, have only just learned of the terrible masquerade which has so long been going on at Barbadoes. My poor brother! How you must have suffered! Captain Mallet professes to have fallen madly in love with me, and, says he will release us all if I will marry him and go with him to some far corner of the world. He has announced his intention of making me some definite offer to the above effect this evening. Meantime he has permitted me to write to you—oh, my poor brother!"

The agony this communication caused Harry was beyond expression.

His father dead! his sister and mother in the hands of the terrible scourge of the Caribbean! the remorseless pirate in love with that sister.

Surely here was a load of misery too great for human endurance!

But he collected his thoughts by a stern effort, and forced himself to speak calmly.

"Have you any objections to giving this letter to Miss Morrow?" he asked Brewer.

"Not the least, sir."

"Then please give it to her, and tell her that I am as well as usual."

Brewer took the letter, and vanished.

Harry resumed his intent listening.

A few moments later he shuddered as if pained beyond expression.

"She has read it! She knows all!" he ejaculated. "Perhaps it was cruel to add such a load of misery to that she was already enduring. But it will at least be well and wise for her to know what is going on around her!"

An hour passed in one long convulsion of misery—and then another.

At length a light flashed into the darkness around him, borne in the hand of a stranger, who advanced to the front of the cage, looking

in upon him with a countenance displaying a curious mixture of emotions.

"I have come to pay you a little visit, Major Clyde," announced the visitor with a voice full of excitement, and with a mien which attested that he was far from feeling at his ease. "You have often heard of me, of course—so that no particular introduction is necessary. I am Captain Mallet!"

Harry signified his comprehension of the fact by a slight nod.

"Your sister has no doubt told you what is in the wind," pursued Mallet. "From the moment when I first saw her three days ago, I have not been able to banish her a moment from my thoughts. And, pirate as I am, I feel that I could reform for her sake. I have accordingly proposed to her to become my wife, and to go with me to France to spend the remainder of our days—and she has consented!"

Harry uttered the word with a tremor of wondering horror.

"Upon conditions, of course," added Mallet, as his stern features relaxed an instant in a wolfish smile. "I offered to set you and your mother free, as well as Gov. Morrow and his daughter. I am frank enough to say that the sacrifice has cost your sister a great effort, but she has none the less consented."

"But I will never consent to purchase my freedom by any such infamy!" cried Harry, excitedly. "I—"

"Softly, my young friend," interrupted Mallet, as his smile became still more wolfish. "I am only telling you these things for your information, and am not asking for your brotherly blessing to my proposed union. You will have nothing to say in the premises. I am going to send you aboard of a British cruiser which has appeared off our retreat, and with which I am already in communication to this end. You will have to go immediately, and as a matter of security or of precaution against any possible outbreak of frenzy on your part, Major, I shall send you aboard of the cruiser bound securely. This is all I have to tell you."

He called to several of his men who stood at the entrance of the hatchway, and in a few moments, despite all his desperate efforts to the contrary, Harry was enveloped in a netting of stout cords, which left him unable to move hand or foot. Then he was gagged with equal rigour.

"Away with him!" ordered Mallet.

Harry was carried to the deck and lowered into a boat lying alongside, with a solitary person in it.

Then Mallet himself slipped down to the boat, and seized a pair of oars, as did the other man, and the two men rowed rapidly across the bight of the harbour to a pool of deep water close under one of its most elevated banks.

"This is the place to dump him, Morrel," suddenly said Mallet, ceasing to row.

"Yes," whispered the other, whose voice betrayed him to be the false major. "This is the end of him!"

"Then over with him!"

In another moment the bound and helpless victim was seized and hurled over the side of the boat into the water.

"And now to finish the work of the night, Morrel," said Mallet, as soon as the form of our hero had vanished from view. "There's not a moment to lose."

They resumed their oars, and rowed rapidly away in the direction of the wharf in front of the settlement.

In the course of a few minutes they had landed and were taking their way along the path leading to Mallet's villa.

All around the two men was a scene of noisy festivity.

From every house lights were gleaming. Merry shouts of rejoicing floated out upon the air.

The returned pirates were evidently determined to pass the night in drunken festivity, as was their wont after their return from a successful cruise.

All save the usual number of sentinels were engaged in this manner.

"I am glad to see them making themselves comfortable, Morrel," resumed Mallet. "Our secret was well kept, I see. No one suspects our proposed departure. But still I am nervous. There is a great deal of liquor circulating, and we have been obliged to take a number of the men into our confidence. I am a little nervous about some of them. Let's be off at once."

They had reached the villa by the time Morrel had responded to these nervous suggestions, and in another moment had turned a key or two and thrust themselves into the presence of Harry's mother and sister.

It was no wonder that Mallet had become madly infatuated with the fair girl who had been thrown into his presence.

She was as lovely as Essie Morrow herself, only with a darker and more commanding type of beauty.

As to Mrs. Clyde, she was a kindly and motherly-looking lady, still in the prime of life, and with great force of character, as well as with very striking traces of the beauty for which in her girlish days she had been distinguished.

"We have come to take you to your son, Mrs. Clyde," said Mallet, with a low bow. "All the particulars of your ransom have been arranged with the major, and a boat is in waiting to take you all off, under a sort of flag of truce, to a British cruiser that is lying at anchor off the entrance of the harbour."

The mother and daughter exchanged glances.

"You will excuse me for remarking, Captain Mallet," Mrs. Clyde then said, "that neither of us has the least confidence in your representations. We do not know whether you intend to take us to my son or not, but we do know that we are at your mercy, and we shall offer no opposition."

"It is well, madame," interrupted Mallet, briefly. "Time presses. We are anxious to make an end of the whole matter—since it seems to be written, Miss Clyde, that you can give me no hope of the eventual acceptance of my suit. Please come with us to the boat which is to take you off to the schooner."

The two men led the way from the house, and arm in arm the mother and daughter followed, declining all offers of assistance.

In due course they reached the beach, and were soon conveyed to the deck of the pirate schooner.

"Get under way at once, Morrel, and as quietly as possible," said Mallet, as he reached the entrance of the cabin. "I will manage things between the young women."

It appeared that all the necessary arrangements had been made beforehand.

A sufficient crew had been gathered quietly on the deck of the schooner, and enough had been said of the real business in hand for every man to desire the success of the projected clandestine departure.

In a very few moments, therefore, a portion of the sails had been set, the anchor hove apeak and the schooner had taken its way towards the entrance of the harbour.

The forts had been duly notified that a movement of the kind would be made, and had been given a satisfactory excuse for it, so that not the least trouble was to be apprehended in that quarter.

Indeed, no trouble arose.

The wind being fine and favourable, the run-away was soon threading the narrow channel between the forts, and in due course of time emerged from the last of the difficult passages leading to the open sea, and commenced, with a breeze that increased rapidly, to stand directly out into the Caribbean.

"The thing is done!" muttered Morrel, drawing a rough breath. "No alarm has been raised. The schooner and the treasure—all is safely in our keeping!"

A considerable noise and confusion arose at this moment at the entrance of the cabin, and Gov. Morrow and Mrs. Clyde came hurrying forth, followed by Essie and Florence, who were

in turn followed by their keepers, Quaddo and his mother.

"It is as we feared, Mrs. Clyde," exclaimed Governor Morrow. "We are being carried off to sea."

And turning to Mallet, who was now rejoined by Morrel, the governor added:

"You have deceived us! May the blight of an outraged heaven—"

"Now, don't be noisy, old man," interrupted Mallet. "If you do—"

He paused as the false major clutched him by the arm.

"Why should we bother with him or with the old woman?" asked the false major. "Is there the least probability that you will ever be able to make the least impression upon the heart of Miss Clyde, through or by the little combinations we have imagined?"

"Not the least? Or that you will effect anything by unincising matters with Miss Morrow?"

"Not the slightest," answered Morrel.

"Then let's throw off the mask entirely, proposed Mallet, with eyes glowing wolfishly. "There is a boat astern! Let's draw it alongside, and drop the old woman and the governor into it. Thus we shall be rid of them, as we are rid of the major, and shall have the two girls entirely in our clutches! and then ho! for a merry life with them, at any hiding-place to which we choose to carry them!"

The thought was too satanic not to please the false major.

A few words were addressed hurriedly to a portion of the crew, and while Mallet and Morrel dragged the two young girls to the cabin, Gov. Morrow and Mrs. Clyde were sent adrift upon the raging waters!

(To be Continued.)

A CODE OF RULES FOR BICYCLERS.

At a meeting of the Council of the Bicycle Union, a body representing a majority of the larger bicycle clubs in the United Kingdom, it was decided to issue a code of rules in reference to the conduct of bicyclists on the public road. The council recommend that a rider should at all times keep to the left hand side of the road, even if no vehicle be in sight; and riding on the footway should never be resorted to.

Not the least important rule is the last, which says that for night riding a lamp should be used, to signify to other passengers the whereabouts of the bicyclist, and in frequented thoroughfares warning should be given by bell, or in some noticeable manner, of his otherwise noiseless approach. A tax of 15s. a bicycle has been suggested by the secretary, who tells us that there are 100,000 bicycle owners.

THE TWO TREATIES.—The sketch map prepared by General Sir Lintorn Simmons to illustrate Lord Salisbury's despatch of July 10, shows that the New Bulgaria, the limits of which were settled at Berlin, will conclude 17,306 geographical square miles, and that the territory taken from Turkey by the Treaty of San Stefano and restored to it by the Berlin Congress comprises 30,700 geographical square miles.

We understand that Mlle. Rosa Bonheur was much struck with the Highland cattle exhibited at the Paris Exhibition, and wished to purchase or hire the bull shown by Mr. Duncan, of Kilmuir, N.B., for the purpose of studying it as a model. The owner, however, gallantly refused such offers, and begged the artist to accept it free of all charge so long as she might require it, and we shall doubtless some day see this fine specimen of the Highland Scot immortalised in some of Rosa Bonheur's pictures.

LORD WHARFCLIFFE announces that the Secretary of War has consented to allow all Martini rifles issued to competitors for the Queen's Prize to be left with the volunteers.



[A STRANGE FATE.]

THE LOST CHILD.

He had looked for him all day—all night. It was dawn again, and he must go home without him—without his little child—his treasure—his most precious thing on earth. He must go home and tell his mother that the boy was not found.

He would never be found now; the man felt sure of that.

All his life he had dreaded this—all the little life of that baby boy.

He had been like a man who wandered among thieves with a diamond in his possession in full sight of all eyes.

It seemed to him that someone must rob him of it.

All the old stories of gipsies who stole children had troubled him sorely.

His heart had ached over the pitiful tale of the little chimney-sweeper who, more than a hundred years ago, while plying his trade, came down the chimney of the nursery from which he had been stolen when a tinier fellow, and recognising it and his mother, was restored to love and home at last.

Often in the night had the thought so overcome him that he had stolen from his bed in the darkness to feel the little head of his sleeping boy on the pillow of his crib.

Even his wife, the child's mother, who had loved him so, would have laughed at his fancies. So he kept them to himself.

Once only—once he was forced to tell her of them.

That was when he tattooed the little child's foot.

Right on the instep he had marked it with a little blue W.

It was painful.

Every prick hurt him worse than it did the boy.

The mother, coming home, had been angry and grieved.

Then he told her:

"If the child were stolen we should know him, though his face altered—though he forgot his name and home. That is why I did it."

And she had said:

"People have children enough of their own. Children are only valuable to their parents. You are so romantic—so foolish."

Now it had come.

The foolish fear was realised.

Lost or stolen, the boy was gone, and that tattoo mark was the only thing that comforted him.

Alive or dead, they should know him—now, or after long years.

For those marks were indelible, and no one else would mark his foot with that tiny W and the tiny cross that followed.

Alive or dead?

Could the boy be dead?

He cast up his hands in agony and uttered a cry that rang right through the sleeping street.

People turned in their beds and said to themselves that there was a fight somewhere, or that some drunken man was making the night hideous.

Some early risers ended their sleep then and there, for dawn was already breaking.

But no one knew why the man cried out, or who he was, or where he went, save the solitary policeman.

The man gave him a grave salute as he passed him.

Neither asked the other:

"Have you found the child?"

They knew the question was useless.

But at home, where the lights had burned all night, the mother, who paced to and fro, asked it, although she knew the answer would be:

"No."

"You have not searched everywhere," she said. "You have forgotten some place—some one's house where he may be gone. Go out again—go! I will go also. You told me you would bring him back, or I would not have been left at home. Go!"

The man turned on his very threshold.

"I thought he might be here," he said, "and I wanted to tell you—the tattoo mark, we shall be sure—"

Then he fell forward on his face. For twenty-four hours he had not tasted food, but only his faintness told him that he was hungry.

Then the mother remembered that she was a wife also.

The wretched people ate and drank—stones and sea-water, for aught they knew; but they needed strength.

For days they looked for their child in every direction.

The river was dragged, the hospitals, even the prisons, searched.

They spent their small means in advertising.

They posted notices of their loss on the walls.

All in vain.

After others knew that they followed a forlorn hope, they still pursued it as earnestly as ever.

And so the weeks rolled by; the months faded; the years followed.

Theirs was a hard case.

If death had taken the boy it would have been far easier to bear; but they did not believe him dead, and where was he?

In whose hands?

Had he mourned for them and for home? Had he been ill-used—beaten?

They knew nothing, and the suspense wore their lives away.

It was an old story to others very soon; it was always terribly new to them.

At any moment it seemed to them that the door might open and their child enter, and the patter of little feet upon the stones set their hearts beating wildly.

This when ten years had passed, and the child of four would have been a child no longer, but a youth taller, doubtless, than his mother.

No other children came to these people, and they were very miserable.

The man seemed crushed, he had neither ambition nor energy.

The woman went about her daily toil in a dull, listless manner.

Their hair grew grey and their brows wrinkled very early.

Friends were pitiful; but grief does not invite—rather repels.

At last they seemed to stand alone in the world; old acquaintances and relatives were gone, or had forgotten them. They made no new ones.

Poor, lonely, sad, they clung to each other's sorrows and trials.

There was no joy to share. Their child would have been eighteen years old—was, if he lived—when what is called a piece of good luck happened to them.

A far-away relative died and left them a little fortune.

He had not taken much notice of them during his life, but he had given them a thought on his death-bed. They were comparatively rich.

When they knew it, the same thought came to each at once.

The woman uttered it first.

"Martin," said she, "perhaps we can find our boy, after all. When once we have the money we will advertise him over the length and breadth of the land. He may not remember, but the blessed mark you put upon his foot, that he will know of. He will come to us—I feel sure of it—at last, Martin, at last."

"Yes, it may be so, Agnes," the man said. "It may be so; the time has been long, the days woful, but we may be happy, after all that has gone. Agnes, I believe it will be so."

They kissed each other, and made ready for the journey which they needs must take to enter upon their inheritance.

And they travelled together over the road with eyes that grew brighter for this small spark of hope in their hearts.

Through all the proceedings that followed, this grew and grew; and when, at last, they found themselves undisputed owners of a pretty house and money enough to live on in comfort, they began to feel sure that their boy would yet share it with them.

The first evening in the new house was almost happy.

"Agnes, we must put this cash away in a bank to-morrow," said the husband, counting over a roll of notes. "It is not safe to keep it here, and we must be careful; we have that to do which must make us economical."

"Yes, Martin," said his wife, as she held the light for him and he locked the small, old-fashioned safe. "You see, when the boy comes to us, we will want to do all we can for him, and home must be a pretty place. We can live on almost nothing until he does come."

Afterward, in the dark, their heads close together on the pillow, the elderly couple talked on, dreaming like children.

"Martin," said Agnes, "when he does come, our poor boy! perhaps he will be rough and not well-mannered; he has not had us to teach him; we must be very lenient."

"Yes, yes," said Martin; "but the boy will improve. He will improve. Young as he is, he can go to college yet."

"Away from us?" said the mother.

"No no, he shall come home every day," said the father. "Will he be tall, I wonder? We are usually tall, but your people are shorter."

"Something may have happened to hurt his looks," said the mother; "but we would only love him better for it if it is so. However he comes, we will be so good, so good to him. He will come, will he not, Martin? he could not be dead, after all?"

"No, no, I feel sure that he will come. I've known all the while he was not dead," said Martin. "I'll advertise all over Europe. If that fails, even in India, in some way. You see, he may have been carried to some foreign country. Men who know all languages that are spoken shall see that my advertisement is put into each one. Yes, we will have him back."

"Hark," said Agnes; "what is that?"

They listened. A low, grating sound at the door below, regular and carefully subdued—a click—a crack.

"Some one is trying to break in," said Martin.

Agnes hid her face in the pillows. They were alone in a lonely house on a lonely road. They had several hundred pounds in their possession.

Martin was not a powerful man, and though he had a pistol, there might be two or three against one, and then there was little hope for him.

He arose and took his weapon in his hands, and felt about in the dark for matches.

And Agnes heard a creaking of the floor and the sound of muffled footsteps, and also sprang to the floor.

"They are at the safe below!" cried Martin. "Agnes, the money—the money for our boy! Oh! if my life is lost for its sake, I cannot lose that! I cannot—I cannot!"

"Martin! Martin! stay—do not go. What can you do—one man alone?" screamed Agnes. But he was gone.

She was alone in the darkness.

It was all over in a moment.

There were shots, oaths—a fall—silence.

She crept downstairs, trembling so that she could scarcely stand.

Leaning against the safe was her husband, blood upon his sleeve; on the floor lay a man in a crape mask, stiffening in death.

"Martin!" sobbed the woman. "Martin!"

"I have killed him!" cried the man. "Fasten the door—put up the great bar. Had I not forgotten that, they could not have entered. Oh, it is terrible, but I could not lose every chance of my boy. They fired at me, I at them. I wounded both. This one is dying. I am a little hurt—not much—and the money is safe—untouched. Oh, to think I should have killed a man! I!"

"Martin, he may not be dead," said the woman. "He is young. I hope he is not dead. Perhaps he has a mother somewhere. Let me bind up your hand. Then we will try to restore him. Dear Martin, even if it is so, who can blame you? Poor, poor boy!"

She bound up the graze on her husband's hand.

Then they lifted the young man's body to the soft rug, and undid the mask. A face was revealed, young, handsome, and pallid as marble.

"Oh, it is terrible!" said the wife. "No older than our poor boy. Oh, Martin, he is dead, I fear. I will loosen his necktie. You take off his shoes and rub his feet. Oh, morning is so far away. This is such a lonely place. Martin, what is it?"

She stared at her husband in horror. His face was as the face of death.

He sat ghastly and terrible to look upon, holding in his hand one of the feet that he had undressed.

"Dead!" he said, wildly. "Dead! and I shot him—I!"

"Martin!" shrieked the wife. She laid the dead man's head down on the rug and crept up to her husband. "Heaven will forgive you," she said; and then her eyes, dilating, fixed themselves upon the point at which her husband stared.

It was the foot of the young burglar. The left shoe was off—the stocking also.

The high white instep was uncovered, and on it she saw a little tattooed W with a tiny cross beside it. It was her son who lay there.

"Martin!" she screamed again. "Martin, remember what I told you. He had not us to teach him what was right—remember—remember."

But Martin only moaned.

"He is dead, and I killed him!" He felt blindly for his pistol. "Forgive me, Agnes, for I cannot live," he said; but at that moment the woman, with her hand upon the breast of the prostrate man, screamed out:

"His heart beats, Martin—he lives!"

The next day a strange story flew about the neighbourhood. The child those two strange people had lost, years ago, had returned to them.

That very night burglars had entered the house and wounded him. His life was in danger.

The doctor had been there all the morning, but the mother had no fears.

"Heaven had sent him back, and he would not die," she said.

It is never too late for repentance, and the love of those poor parents was very strong. Strange as the beginning was, the end was peace, and the household, so strangely re-united, was a happy one at last.

M. K. D.

THERE is no fortune so good but that it may be reversed, and none so bad but it may be bettered.

THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS.

IN view of the importance attached to the new acquisition of Great Britain in the Mediterranean, we give a sketch of the Island of Cyprus from "Murray's Handbook for Travellers," which will be read with interest. Cyprus is the most eastern island of the Mediterranean, and lies off the coast of Syria. It is 145 miles in length, extreme breadth 55 miles, and its minimum breadth 27 miles, having an area of 4,500 square miles—about the size of Jamaica, or nearly a third less than Yorkshire, and has now a population of 200,000. It has hitherto been but little visited by travellers, owing to the erroneous statements regarding it. There is, however, no reason why travellers should not visit this island with as great impunity as any other part of the Levant.

The climate varies in different parts; the northern region is the most hilly and wooded, and the least fertile, and the heat in that district is tempered by the winds from the Karamanian Mountains, which preserve the frozen snow in the highest spots during the greater part of the year. The cold is very severe in winter. In the plains in the southern districts of Cyprus the heat of the sun is excessive, but is moderated by the sea breeze. The richest as well as the most agreeable parts of the island are in the vicinity of Cerinea and Paphos (Baffo).

Larnaka, the chief seaport of the island, is about a quarter of a mile distant from the sea; the Consuls and most of the European inhabitants reside at a suburb on the seashore, called by the Italians the Marina, which is the chief depot of the commerce of the whole island. Although Larnaka is situated in what is regarded as the worst part of Cyprus, the country around being arid, this port, it is stated, has been selected solely owing to the safe anchorage of its roads. About an hour's ride from Larnaka, situated on the borders of the large Salt Lake, on the road to Citti, is a mosque in which the Turks suppose to be interred the body of the wet-nurse of their prophet.

Nikosia, the capital of Cyprus, was besieged by the Turks under Mustapha in 1570, the siege lasting forty-five days, when it was taken by storm; between the gates of Famagusta and Baffo, situate in a pretty garden, is a small mosque in which is interred the Bairactar, or standard-bearer, who first planted the Turkish flag on the walls. From the summit of the minaret of this mosque the best view, it is stated, is to be had, the mulberry and palm trees being interspersed with minarets and ancient Christian churches, now converted into mosques.

The principal products of the island are wheat, barley, cotton, silk, madder-roots, olive oil, wine, carobs, hemp, pitch, wool, tobacco, salt, fine timber and fruit; there is an average yield of 1,246,000 gallons of wine and 198,000 cwt. of salt.

These are stated to form four-fifths of the entire exportation, which is at present principally to Marseilles, Leghorn, Trieste, and Coast of Syria. Nearly the entire imports consist of British goods brought from Beyrout, Constantinople, Smyrna, and the Mediterranean ports. Efforts were made in 1866 to increase the growth of cotton.

From Limasoi there is a considerable trade in the shipment of wines and raki, made in the vicinity, to Egypt and the islands of the Archipelago; large quantities of carobs, which grow in the neighbouring forests, are shipped to Russia and Italy. To the sportsman Cyprus offers a wide and untrodden field. Its hills and valleys are described as swarming with hares, partridges, francolins, bustards, and quails; in the winter, woodcocks, snipe, and wild duck are found in great abundance; mufions, or wild sheep, and wild boars, are to be had at Cape St. Epiphanius, the district around which, called the forest of Acama, is uninhabited.

The antiquities of the island belong to three distinct epochs—Grecian, Roman, and Christian. The period of the Byzantine dukes lasted nine centuries; and among many fine churches

erected at that period is still to be seen the superb one of Machera. There is a conjecture, for which no ground is assigned, that the monuments of that period were in a great part destroyed during the time that the island was held by Richard I. of England.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

ONCE upon a time, so runs the most authentic story, one of the Great Frederick's favourite chaplains was taken from him by the hand of death.

The peculiar qualities in the deceased ecclesiastical had not been more his devout piety and heartfelt reverence than his known courage in danger and presence of mind in seasons of astoundment. Said the great king:

"Ah me!" where shall I find another man so truly devout and so conscientiously devoted to his religious duty, who will at the same time possess such wondrous presence of mind? Ah! good Father Isaac's wits were never wanting."

At length, however, a candidate was recommended to his favourable consideration—a man known to be pious and devout, and against whom no breath of scandal had ever been turned.

"But what is his courage?" demanded Frederick. "What would he do in a moment of mortal terror which had burst unexpectedly over his head?"

The proposer shook his head. He could not say.

"Ha!" cried the king, "we will try him. Look ye: He shall preach in our chapel next Sunday afternoon, and I will be there. But he is to have no sermon prepared. I will myself, when I enter the chapel, place in his hand a sealed packet, within which he will find the text; and from that text he will preach his sermon."

The ecclesiastic was consulted, and readily consented to the proposition.

The eventful day arrived, and the clergyman entered the chapel, and, as he passed up the centre aisle, an officer in gaudy uniform—aide-camp of the king, put a sealed paper into his hand, at the same time whispering, "From his Majesty!"

The clergyman ascended to the pulpit—read the Scriptures—gave out the two hymns—made an appropriate prayer, in which the king was recognised without fulsomeness—and then he arose and broke the seal of the missive he had received, and found it—blank! Not a word, nor a pen-mark appeared.

With a calm smile the clergyman cast his eyes over the congregation, and then said:

"Brethren and Sisters,—here is nothing." And he held up the paper to show that it was blank. "Blessed is he whom nothing can annoy; whom nothing can make afraid, or swerve from his duty. We read that the Lord made from nothing all things! And yet look at the stupendous majesty of His infinite creation!"

And thereupon the candidate went on with a powerful and eloquent discourse on the wonders and beauties of creation.

Suffice it to say that Frederick bestowed upon him the vacant chaplaincy, and that in time he came to be the king's chief confidant and spiritual adviser.

HOW TO BUD ROSES.

JULY is the best time for budding roses, and though this is rather a delicate operation, you may like to try your hand at it. A great many kinds of roses are strengthened and improved by being budded on stocks of a more hardy nature, and the best for this purpose are good healthy stems of the common wild briar. You must so observe your stock, and the bud you intend transferring to it, as to place them in suitable relative positions. Choose a twig on

which the leaf-buds are not too far advanced, and detach one by passing a sharp knife from an inch or more below the eye to half an inch above it, just so deep as to insure the raising of so much of the wood, particularly under the eye, as shall cause that part to be at least level with, if not rather prominent over, the parts above and below it.

Next pare away just the edges of the bark at the base of the shield, which is the name technically given to the outer strip of stem attached to a bud. Select an even piece of the top of your stock, round which something can be tied freely, and make an incision right home to the wood, and then raise the edges of the bark very clearly, and wide enough to insure the certain admission and passing of the shield of the bud to its full length, making a little cross cut about the third of an inch above and below the incision.

Next slip the bud you have prepared tenderly into the stock so that it may slide under the lips of long cut; and when the eye is below the cross cut, take your knife again and cut the upper projecting bit of bark quite level across, so as to make it rest accurately against the edge of the rind of the stock, the bark of each thus touching the other. Then bind it all round with a soft but very strong and pliable strip of wetted garden mat, about a quarter of an inch wide. Pass this round the back of the stock so that, as the ends meet, they will grasp and draw the edges of the bark over the newly-inserted bud, which must be left outside and free to sprout, while the piece of mat is wound round and round, over and below, so that it entirely covers the space operated on both above and beneath.

The aim of this is to make every portion of the shield touch the sap wood of the stock without wounding the tissues, or forcing juice to ooze from them. If the bud takes, it swells and enlarges, and usually throws out leaves before autumn.

FACETIÆ.

"MASTER'S MAN."

THEY advertised the other day for a "Master's Clerk" at the Islington Workhouse. He "must have a good knowledge of the Master's books, write well, and be willing to make himself generally useful." Should he suit, the selected of the parish is to receive six shillings per week and "all found" after the first three months. All applicants were to "bring testimonials."

What a state of suspense the happy clerk will be in until he is informed, after his three months of meritorious and gratuitous service, that he is at last to receive the reward he has so gallantly won!

The rejected among the applicants may well take one further step, and if not allowed to enter the workhouse as Master's Clerks, be "willing to make themselves generally useful" in a capacity more usually associated with institutions of this kind.

After all, it would be a distinction with only six shillings' worth of difference. —Fun.

GOLD IN EGYPT.

BURTON'S "Anatomy of Midian" seems like to turn out anything but an Anatomy of Melancholy. Gold, silver, copper, lead, turquoises, alabaster, sulphur, to say nothing of antiquities from the ruins of thirty-two ancient cities—such are some of the treasures this new Moses has brought back from the land of Midian, the "Ophir," it is believed, which furnished Solomon with gold.

It will go hard with our century and its Stock Exchanges if they do not find their Solomons to draw gold, if not out of Midian, out of a Midian-Exploration-and-Exploitation Company; promoters—say—Baron Grant and his Imperial Highness the Khedive.

We see magnificent pickings, not so much from under the stony ribs of Midian as out of

the pockets of the public of all nations, which rises to magnificent programmes and a dazzling prospect of possible or impossible percentages. And what a field for the prospectus-drawer is this re-discovered land of Midian!

Meantime, whatever plucking of his own poor fellows or the public the Khedive may contemplate, all honour to Captain Burton for the pluck which has been crowned with such a rich find as these newly-discovered treasures of Midian. May they not prove spoilers of the Egyptians. They could scarcely spoil the credit of their rulers. —Punch.

SOUVENIR DE WIMBLEDON.

ADJUTANT (going his rounds at night): "Put out those lights!"

Out go the lights.

ADJUTANT: "Stop that music!"

Music goes on.

ADJUTANT (louder): "Stop that music, I say!"

VOICE (from inside the tent): "It's no good, sir! It's a musical box, and we can't stop it! It will go on for ten minutes more!" —Punch.

RACE AND RIBBON.

FROM the winner, just weighing, look back to the starter,

One name, if not one race, the blue ribbon shows;

From a countess of Salisbury came the first garter,

The last to a Marquis of Salisbury goes. —Punch.

NATURAL INFERENCE.

JUVENILE (to old Pawkins, who isn't "at home" with children): "Ain't you going to dance?"

PAWKINS (doing his best): "Well, my boy—ah—yaaa—eh—no—I think—"

JUVENILE: "I s'ppose you've come for a regular 'stodge' at the supper!" —Punch.

CHEMICAL CON.

WHY should the best codliver-oil be a more suitable medicine for boys than grown men?—Because it is puerile. —Judy.

WHY is the letter "I" never too late?—Because it is always in time. —Judy.

A POSER.

SEVEN YEAR OLD: "Grandma, Mother Shipton says the world will come to an end in 1881. Is that true?"

GRANDMA: "No, dear, for in the Bible we are told, 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man,' &c."

S. Y. O.: "Ah, but Mother Shipton was a woman!" —Judy.

OF COURSE.

"Don't you sing, Mr. Stubbs?"

"Well—ah, no—I don't."

"But all your people do."

"Well, you see, I've got no voice like the rest of them. It isn't my fault—I wasn't consulted. If I'd had a voice in the matter—er—(getting mixed)—I'd have had one." —Judy.

EXTRACT FROM THE EXAMINATION PAPERS OF A NAVAL CADET.

(Who Trusted Solely to the Light of Nature).

Q. What is the punishment for an officer found sleeping in his watch?

A. I should say that he had already suffered very close confinement.

Q. What are brigs?

A. They are called two-masted vessels, but they really have fore masts.

Q. What is a "long splice?"

A. A golden wedding.

Q. To what purposes is the spar deck applied?

A. Boxing matches.

Q. Tell me what you know of the "reconciling sweep."

A. Never heard of him before. Don't believe there is such a chap. A fellow like that would want folks to fight instead of stopping them.

Q. Where is the "spanker?"

A. In "Dombey & Son"—Mrs. MacStinger.
 Q. What is a "gammoning hole?"
 A. A slopseller's shop.
 Q. Describe "sheer wales."
 A. I never travelled in the Principality, but I suppose it is where they do not speak any English.
 Q. What is a "square body?"
 A. A good fellow like —, who always pays up when he loses.
 Q. What are "whelps?"
 A. Cads like — and —, who can only remember a bet when they win it.
 Q. What is the "rake of a mast?"
 A. In a merchantman often there is none, but there is very often a rake of a master.
 Q. What is the use of scuttles?
 A. To put coals in?
 Q. What does the "badge" show?
 A. That there is a cab-in.
 Q. Which is the most forward of the "bends?"
 A. The Grecian.
 Q. What is the "cat-fall?"
 A. On her feet.
 Q. What are "bolsters for sheets" made of?
 A. Bedtick and feathers.
 Q. What is a wain-boit?
 A. (Mistake in the spelling.) A stampede in a shower.
 Q. Where are the "flats?"
 A. They are not confined to any one particular part of the ship.
 Q. What are "gripes?"
 A. I was not aware that I should be expected to answer medical questions.
 Q. What is a "guy?"
 A. I could show you, if I had a looking — but I do not wish to be personal.
 Q. What do you understand by "quick work?"
 A. The way in which I am answering this paper.
 Q. What is "the tuck?"
 A. That depends upon the amount of tick.
 Q. What is the meaning of "without board?"
 A. "I am starving."
 Q. What are "partners?"
 A. Cannot recollect just now. Most probably they have something to do with the counter.
 Q. What is a yard?
 A. Three feet, or 36 inches. (I am sure that's right.)
 Q. What are the "steps of the mast?"
 A. That would depend, I should imagine, on the rate at which the ship was walking through the water.
 Q. What do you mean by coming "tumbling home?"
 A. I never did, sir. I am incapable of such disgraceful conduct. Never was intoxicated in my life. I am an officer and a gentleman. At least, I am a gentleman, and I hope to be an officer.
 —Judy.

SCIENTIFIC.

ORGANIC CHANGES.—The succession of tunes on a hardy-gurdy.
 —Fun.

WANTED, TO KNOW.

WHAT is the difference between a Welsh air and a Welsh rabbit?
 —Judy.

STATISTICS.

STATISTICS ABOUT WRITING.—A rapid penman can write thirty words in a minute. To do this he must draw his pen through the space of a rod sixteen and a half feet. In forty minutes his pen travels a furlong. We make on an average sixteen curves or turns of the pen in writing each word. Writing thirty words in a minute, we must make 480 to each minute; in an hour, 28,800; in a day of only five hours, 144,000; and in a year of 300 days, 43,200,000. The man who made 1,000,000 strokes with his pen in a month was not at all remarkable. Many men, newspaper writers for instance, make 4,000,000. Here we have, in the aggregate, a mark of 300 miles long to be traced on paper by

such a writer in a year. In making each letter of the ordinary alphabet we must make from three to seven turns of the pen, or an average of three and a half to four. Perhaps some equally ingenious person will next inform us how much ink a journalist can save by not dotting his "i's."

GOING DOWN HILL.

AN, Tom, you were always a little wild,
 And fond of a life of ease,
 And I've heard it said that no other child
 Was ever more hard to please.
 You had a fortune, and spent it free,
 You fed upon dainties fine,
 And sat in the lap of luxury
 As one of a royal line.

Your hands were soft—I remember that—
 Though not as soft as your head,
 For you thought no fellow worth looking at

Who worked for his daily bread.
 You entered into our sports and joys
 With none of the youthful zest
 That fired the souls of the other boys,
 Who were not as finely drest.

I roughed it then, and I've roughed it since,
 And fought every inch of the way,
 While you've been living the life of a prince,

With plenty to serve you each day.
 There were many to envy your rich domain,
 And many to pay you court,

And I might have followed the foolish train,
 Had you been of a manlier sort.

We were boys together, remember, Tom,
 And it didn't take long to see
 You were proud of the house you descended from.

Right proud of your pedigree.
 You talked of "blood" of the bluest strain,
 Our plebeian veins to shock;

But we listened, and thought it was very plain
 You came of a watered stock.

Alas! how soon was the fortune spent
 That labour had ne'er increased;
 How soon the proud and improvident

Devoured the crumbs of the feast!
 And I never gave you a single thought—
 I confess it, Tom—until
 A sight of your well-known face I caught

As you were going down hill.
 It's hard work climbing; the way is rough;
 And few ever reach the top;

But the going down is easy enough,
 And you never know where you'll stop.

And Tom, poor fellow! your lack of skill,
 Your lordly, indolent ways,
 Assure me that at the foot of the hill,
 You'll certainly end your days!

J. P.

GEMS.

WHEN anyone thinks that nobody cares for or loves him, he would do well to ask himself what he has done to make anybody care for and love him.

THERE is no banquet, but some dislike something in it.

LOVE is of the nature of a burning-glass, which kept still in one place burns; changed often, it is powerless.

No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the truer.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CHOCOLATE CARAMELS.—Two cups of sugar, one of molasses, one of milk, one spoonful of butter, one of flour, half a pound of chocolate. Butter your saucepan, put in sugar, molasses and milk, boil fifteen minutes; add butter and flour, stirred to a cream, and boil fifteen minutes longer, then add the chocolate grated, and boil until quite thick. Butter tin flat pans, and pour in the mixture, half an inch thick, and mark it in squares before it gets hard in cooling.

STEAMED OR BOILED PUDDING.—One cup of sour cream, or milk, in which dissolve a half teaspoon of soda; two cups of sweet milk; make a batter a little thicker than for griddle cakes, and add two eggs and half a teaspoon of salt. Put in a basin and steam an hour and-a-half, or boil in a tight vessel, immersed in the hot water. Dried cherries or fresh or English currants stirred in the batter are an improvement.

STARCH FOR FINE MUSLINS.—A solution of gum-arabic in water makes a nice starch for lawns and thin muslins, giving them a new appearance. Dilute the dissolved gum until you find by experiment that you have it just right. It takes but a minute to rub a cloth in it, to test the strength of the gum-water. Lawns renewed in this way, after washing, not only look as though just made up, but retain their good appearance wonderfully well.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE first six days' sale, at Paris, of the diamonds belonging to Queen Isabella of Spain produced 1,692,260 francs (nearly £54,000).

THE Secretary for War has sanctioned an advance of three months field allowance to all officers proceeding to Cyprus.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made between the Great Western Railway Company and the French railway authorities for a line of steamers between Weymouth and Cherbourg.

THE mechanics under the employ of the Marquis of Londonderry, at Seabam, who have been on strike during the last three weeks against a reduction of wages, have submitted to the master's terms, and resumed work.

CAPTAIN WEBB has swum from Gravesend to Woolwich and back again, probably the longest distance swim in fresh water that has ever been accomplished. The time occupied was ten hours all but three minutes, the distance being about forty miles.

NOT long ago, it is said, the late Charles Mathews came into possession of £2000 a year in a rather curious manner. While on his way to India he made the acquaintance of and became very friendly with a fellow passenger, a gentleman of advanced age, who settled it on him, with a reversion to Mr. Mathews's widow.

IT has been decided that the men of the Army Reserve who enlisted for short service, and those who are still in their first period of engagement, cannot remain with the colours after their services as first-class reserve men are dispensed with.

CAPTAIN GRENFELL, 60th Rifles, late aide-de-camp to General Sir Arthur Cunynghame when commanding at the Cape of Good Hope, has been appointed deputy assistant-adjutant and quartermaster-general for service during the present Kafir war.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. S.—You are eligible for the Navy at nineteen years of age. Apply to an agent.

RUBY.—Yes, we believe there are private "asylums" where persons addicted to drink are admitted for a term. The charge would be a matter of arrangement.

E. W. (Swansea).—No, there is no law to compel an employer to reinstate a workman called out to join the Reserve force; but it would be politic on the part of the employer to reinstate, otherwise it would be a great argument in favour of compulsory conscription, which would certainly not suit employers of labour.

THE.—We do not see how you can marry now, if you wish to, inasmuch as, according to your notion, the young lady prefers another. You had better ascertain for a certainty the state of her feelings, and, if she is willing to marry you, ask her to wait for you until you can support a wife.

T. K.—It was very far from being right, and was a flagrant violation of the obligations imposed on the young lady by her engagement with you.

ELLA.—The young man's conduct was not characteristic of a gentleman.

PHILIP.—We should advise you to consult some physician distinguished for the treatment of all kinds of nervous diseases.

LEON.—The young lady, being engaged to you, ought not to receive marked attentions from any other young man. She may not see any present harm in such a correspondence as you speak of, and yet it may lead to the most serious trouble. If she really loves you it ought to be sufficient to dissuade her from it that you object to it. We think her friendship seems rather too miscellaneous.

EMILY.—Whether or not your brother-in-law could collect of your parents the value of what he has furnished you during your residence with him, would depend upon the agreement made between him and your parents with regard to the matter. You ought to act fairly by him, even if you do get cross sometimes. Ingratitude is an odious trait of character.

EDITH.—We think your aunt was in the right. It would have been proper for her or for you to propose going to church. Young ladies should never be kept from church by their beaux.

RIDER.—It was for the gentlemen to propose to start. Probably the other young lady, with her riding-habit on, was waiting all the time to be called.

WILLIE.—The young lady should not have gone away after making an engagement to ride with you, especially without writing to you to excuse herself. At the same time her leaving an invitation for you to come where she was visiting indicates that it was mere thoughtlessness on her part, and not intentional rudeness. You may as well call and see her, but tell her you felt some hesitation about coming, under the circumstances.

CEST.—Require of the young man that he furnish satisfactory information to your parents on the points about which they have misgivings.

FAN.—Begin by speaking to the young man himself about it.

HOUSEKEEPER.—The fruit of the common wild cherry tree is used for flavouring brandy, and for various kinds of jellies, the preparation of which belongs to a department with which we do not meddle, the directions of the cookery-books, and of the periodicals which make a speciality of this form of human effort, being full and explicit. We only remind you of the distinction between the common wild cherry and the choke cherry, of which the finest is dark crimson in colour, while the true wild cherry is black, inclining to purple.

JULIA.—Tell your parents all about the affair at once. Do not delay a day.

CARRIE.—Either, on recognising the other, would be justified in speaking; but the obligation would seem to be on those who had received the other party at their house, and on a friend's introduction.

C.—Be governed entirely by your own feeling in the premises.

SAM.—She should not receive particular attention from anyone but yourself.

ELIZ.—We do not know of any such ink, but we should think something of the kind would be in great demand by the politicians.

T. P.—The gentleman should precede the lady on entering a church.

ALFRED, nineteen, brown hair, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady about seventeen, fond of home.

LILY Y. and JENNY H., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Lily Y. is twenty, fair, fond of home and music. Jenny H. is twenty-one, dark, of a loving disposition, fond of home.

CASE SHOT and SHRAPNELL SHELL, two gunners in the R.M.A., would like to correspond with two young ladies. Case Shot is twenty, tall. Shrapnell Shell is twenty-five, fair, tall.

PATTIE, ANNIE, and ELIZA, three friends, would like to correspond with three young men. Pattie is twenty-eight, tall, dark hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and children. Annie is nineteen, tall, dark hair, dark blue eyes, fond of home, music, and dancing, thoroughly domesticated. Eliza is nineteen, medium height, light hair, blue eyes, fair, fond of home, domesticated, and loving. Respondents must be between twenty and thirty, good-looking.

POLLIE, twenty-seven, medium height, fond of home and children, would like to correspond with a seaman in the Royal Navy, with a view to matrimony. Must be about thirty.

LUCIEN, twenty-eight, fair, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty with a view to matrimony.

SAM A. J., thirty-six, good-tempered, would like to correspond with a lady about thirty, good-looking, of a loving disposition.

FIVE.

"But a week is so long!" he said,
With a toss of his curly head;
"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven!
Seven whole days! Why, in six, you know,
(You said it yourself—you told me so)
The Creator up in Heaven
Made all the earth and the seas and skies,
The trees and the birds and the butterflies!
How can I wait for my seeds to grow?"

"But a month is so long!" he said,
With a droop of his boyish head;
"Hear my count—one, two, three, four—
Four whole weeks, and three days more;
Thirty-one days, and each will creep
As the shadows crawl over yonder steep;
Thirty-one nights, and I shall lie
Watching the stars climb up the sky!
How can I wait till a month is o'er?"

"But a year is so long!" he said,
Uplifting his bright young head;
"All the seasons must come and go
Over the hills with footsteps slow—
Autumn and Winter, Summer and Spring;
Oh, for a bridge of gold to fling
Over the chasm deep and wide,
That I might cross to the other side,
Where she is waiting—my love, my bride!"

"Ten years may be long," he said,
Slowly raising his stately head;
"But there's much to win, there is much to lose;
A man must labour, a man must choose,
And he must be strong to wait!
The years may be long, but who would wear
The crown of honour must do and dare!
No time has he to toy with fate
Who would climb to manhood's high estate!"

"Ah, life is not long!" he said,
Bowing his grand white head;
"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven!
Seven times ten are seventy;
Seventy years! as swift their flight
As swallows cleaving the morning light,
Or golden gleams at even;
Life is short as a summer night—
How long, oh, Lord! is eternity!" C. R. D.

F. C. and M. C., two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. F. C. is nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of home and music, of a loving disposition. M. C. is twenty-two, light hair, blue eyes, fond of home and children.

FLORENCE and NELLIE, cousins, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Florence is twenty, tall, blue eyes. Nellie is seventeen, fair, medium height, blue eyes. Respondents must be good-looking, tall, and dark.

COMMODORE JACK, nineteen, dark hair, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

LOUISE GREVILLE, twenty, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, domesticated, fond of home, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-two, loving, fond of home.

HARRY and WILLIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Harry is twenty-one, of medium height, fair, fond of home. Willie is twenty-two, tall, good-looking, loving.

E. C. D., twenty-four, dark hair, hazel eyes, fair, and medium height, wishes to correspond with a gentleman. Must be fair, good-looking.

POLLY and ROSE, two friends, wish to correspond with two seamen. Polly is twenty-six, dark. Rose is twenty-two, fair. Respondents must be seamen in the Royal Navy.

WALLACE, seventeen, tall, dark hair, hazel eyes, dark, good-tempered, wishes to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about the same age.

B. V. D., twenty, brown hair, grey eyes, domesticated, would like to correspond with a young man about the same age.

C. W. and L. W., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. C. W. is twenty-two, of medium height, fair, loving. L. W. is twenty, tall, dark, good-looking.

JENNIE, fair, auburn hair, tall, grey eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young man with a view to matrimony.

OPHELIA, nineteen, of a loving disposition, tall, dark eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty, fond of home and children, brown hair, dark eyes.

M. D., twenty-two, brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a gentleman. Must be about twenty-five, dark, fond of home, and a teetotaler.

L. N. and F. T., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. L. N. is twenty, tall, brown hair, dark eyes, fond of home. F. T. is twenty-four, medium height, dark brown hair, dark eyes, and very fond of music.

D. C. T., twenty, fair, medium height, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-four, fond of home.

ANN, thirty, fond of home and children, dark, would like to correspond with a gentleman with a view to matrimony.

JONNY, a seaman in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with a young lady. He is twenty-three, tall, good-looking. Respondent must be about nineteen, and fond of children.

L. F. and N. D., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. L. F. is seventeen, light hair, blue eyes, medium height. N. D. is eighteen, medium height, dark hair, dark brown eyes, loving, fond of home and children.

A. G. and D. A. would like to correspond with two young men. A. G. is sixteen, auburn hair, dark grey eyes. D. A. is seventeen, medium height, dark brown hair, grey eyes.

EMILY, twenty-four, fond of home and children, golden hair, blue eyes, loving, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-eight, dark hair, brown eyes, medium height, good-looking, fond of home and children.

L. N. P. and B. B., two friends, would like to correspond with two seamen in the Royal Navy. L. N. P. is twenty-eight, tall. B. B. is nineteen, medium height. Respondents must be between nineteen and twenty-two, dark.

P. H. and T. B., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. P. H. is twenty-seven, dark hair, dark grey eyes, medium height. T. B. is eighteen, fair, medium height, light hair, light grey eyes, thoroughly domesticated.

E. D., twenty, dark, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony, twenty-two, good-tempered.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

MARY is responded to by—W. H. G., twenty-eight, good-looking.

ALICE by—Omega.

CLARA by—William Henry C., twenty, of a loving disposition.

MARY by—Harry S., twenty, curly hair, fair, fond of home and music.

L. M. by—Mets, twenty-three, fond of home, of a loving disposition.

H. W. by—Edith, nineteen, dark, loving.

POLLY by—B. O., twenty-one, tall, blue eyes, fond of home.

MARY by—Seal, twenty-three, tall, curly hair, and grey eyes.

NELLIE by—C. G. S., eighteen, light brown hair, grey eyes.

R. S. F. by—F. M., fair, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children.

W. E. C. by—Dot, a widow.

S. S. by—Zoe, dark.

ROSE by—Robert, twenty-two, fair, of a loving disposition.

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